

CTR

COMMUNITY TELEVISION REVIEW

A Publication of the
Alliance for Community Media
Volume 16, Number 3 • \$4

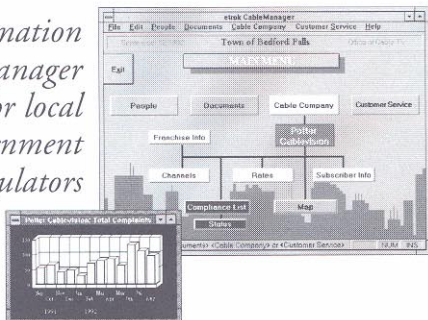


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MAY/JUNE 1993
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Community Television Review is published bi-monthly by the Alliance for Community Media, Inc. (formerly the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers) Subscriptions \$25 a year for six issues. Send subscriptions, memberships, address changes and inquiries to the Alliance for Community Media, 666 11th St. NW, Suite 806, Washington, DC 20001-4542. Phone 202/393-2650 • Fax 202/393-2653.

Address editorial and advertising inquiries to *Community Television Review*, 15 Ionia SW, Suite 201, Grand Rapids, MI 49503-4113. Phone 616/454-6663 • Fax 616/454-6698.

Bulk orders for additional copies considered individually. Contact the national office for information on rates and delivery.

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Produced through the studios of City Media, Inc.



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Unique Fabrics from Identical Threads

By T. Andrew Lewis

In early June, I spoke to a group from the Japan Cable Television Research and Information Center, and responded to some of their concerns: "Will unlimited, individual access lead to an overabundance of 'vanity programs', thus overshadowing programming focused upon community interest? Does the less than commercial technical quality of programs by community producers have an effect upon the level of viewership?" Sound like very familiar questions? These are only two of their many questions that could and have been asked by those from Tucson and Olympia to Atlanta and New York.

Earlier this year, I had similar conversations with media advocates in Australia, Canada and Israel. The vital role of communications within and between nations is being recognized the world over. The Alliance, now an international resource in community communications, is the organization that is contacted for information and assistance. And because of the fundamental, democratic goals and framework of the United States, including the First Amendment, American community media models are frequently adopted or adapted by other nations.

Yet, all is not simple and all is not well. The vagaries of diverse cultures, some of which find the philosophical underpinnings of free speech untenable, complicate the issue. They frequently deter the facile adoption or even adaptation of our system or of access itself. In some places, violent politics preclude free expression. Further, all will not be well in the realm of human communication until there is active, effective participation and contribution by citizens of the world's developing nations. In fact, however, although community media is a com-



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-David Vogel, General Manager,
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-Fred Thomas, Executive Director,
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- Lynn Carillo-Cruz, Executive Director,
Quote...Unquote, Albuquerque

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- Barbara Popovic, Executive Director,
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Public Policy Update

Time missed the point on hatred and bigotry in America

By Alan Bushong

In its June 21 issue, Time Magazine gave America more of the same-old, same-old on public access TV. It is interesting to note that, at the same time, Time-Warner is challenging the constitutionality of cable TV franchising and PEG access requirements in court. A suspicious person might question the integrity of Time's journalism. That suspicious person might also question this attempt to downplay Rush Limbaugh, the profitable controversy distributed by commercial media far more widely than any controversial public access program. I submitted the following response article to Time; its status was unknown at CTR press time.

Time's June 21 "All You Need is Hate" article was a disservice to its readers by glossing over the serious problem of bigotry and hatred in America and by characterizing public access TV channels solely as repositories for hate programming. Time could have significantly improved the article by starting with the concept and words of the last sentence quote from Robert Purvis, administrative director of the National Institute Against

Prejudice and Violence: "Public access is potentially far more valuable in improving intergroup relations than it is in harming them."

Since 1976, the Alliance for Community Media has worked with members across the nation to develop public access TV. The "Hate" article in no way explores public access TV, and the Alliance thinks your readers deserve the whole story.

For more than 20 years, public, educational and governmental access channels and facilities have provided local communities the opportunity to send and receive information using the powerful medium of television. Community groups and individuals are provided equal opportunity to make their voices heard. As a result, new, previously-underrepresented portions of Americans, including minorities, women, youth, seniors and challenged populations, have for the first time become major contributors of ideas and information in the mass media. In less than two decades, community programming has grown to over 15,000 hours of new programs each week, exceeding the combined output of the major broadcast networks. Through community TV, the First Amendment goals of diverse speakers and speech are met, enabling people to share information and culture, solve problems and build a healthy democracy.

Public, educational and government channels have unique and valuable local program-

ming found nowhere else. Cinco de Mayo, Black History Month and International Women's Day are celebrated side-by-side on community channels. City Council meetings, political candidate debates, high school football, girl scout merit badge projects and neighborhood meetings all frequent community channels, although these programs are not capable of attracting commercial sponsors required with broadcast or satellite TV. In many ways, community channels help preserve and define community in the telecommunications age.

Focus on the Real Problem: Fear-based Bigotry and Hatred. Even more alarming is Time's casual treatment of bigotry and hatred in the article. Racially-motivated hatred and violence has led extremists to terrorize, brutalize and kill people of color, people with other religious beliefs and people who are in any way different from the extremists themselves. The article fails to deal either with this pain and destruction or the fear and ignorance which serves as the root cause for bigotry and hatred.

Time missed an opportunity to link the growth of bigotry and hatred to the shift to a global economy, automation and the loss of meaningful jobs in America. Fear mongers have exploited this fear of job loss, placing the blame on people of color, primarily in

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International Update

Community Video Transcends Borders

By Karen Helmersen

The development of community media is a history of concerns and efforts that are common worldwide. Originating from a variety of political, economic and cultural conditions, the non-commercial use of video has evolved a language which transcends international borders. A language which recognizes the importance of diversity and the need to educate ourselves and each other to the issues surrounding our differences. Among these issues are those of preservation - human life, culture and free speech.

The strength and force of coalition building is a cornerstone of the Alliance for Community Media. The Alliance public policy platform, as approved by the Delegates to the 1988 national convention, opens with "Developing technologies and applications of communications media have tremendous potential for human development in all communities and nations of the world. The Alliance is committed to encouraging the fulfillment of this potential." The International Committee, in part, was formalized as a standing committee of the Alliance in order to emphasize organizational support in extending this belief to "all communities and nations." Through a variety of international collaborations, the

Alliance has gained a better understanding of its role and relationship to the development of community media worldwide.

The challenge still remains, however, of bringing this understanding home and incorporating it into our daily lives. By working with other countries, through conferences and by exchanging people and videotapes, we gather the kind of information about other cultures which empowers us to act knowledgeably and in unison with all people. For example, the Alliance has found a remarkable parallel of principles and concerns in the mission statement of organizations like Videazimut and UNESCO.

There exists a universal "sense", if not outright understanding, of the impact that technology and information vehicles have on the quality of our lives. It is extremely important to realize that this impact is also governed by rules which are increasingly international in their structures. These rules are manifest of world commerce and economics which affect regulatory authorities in the development of policy, production and dissemination. In order to achieve a "network of self-determined voices", individuals and communities worldwide must work together. Communities must be able to clearly articulate their commonalities as well as their diversity, and do so through experience. In order to gain representation in the process of determining appropriate regulation, on the national and international level, knowledge through experience is critical.

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Public Policy Update

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other nations. *Time* and the major commercial media have a chance to set the record straight. It is interesting to note that in the cover story, *Time* worked to explain the growth of prostitution through global economic and social factors.

Our country, the great melting pot, has grown strong with diverse peoples and diverse speech, unfettered by the narrow, transient viewpoints of censors. For many years, *Time* magazine has enjoyed the great privilege of speech. *Time* should not begrudge that privilege of others via public access TV.

If *Time* were to tell the real story of public access, or community TV channels, and place hate programming in context, *Time* would need a weekly one page column. Since hate programming comprises less than one percent of community TV, once a year *Time* could take out any penchant for sensationalist coverage of "hate" with a little less than half of the weekly column.

To blame the upsurge of bigotry and hatred on public access TV is to act like an ostrich with its head in the sand; unfortunately, our problems with bigotry and hatred will increase just like the problems of the ostrich. Public access TV has helped to expose dangerous behavior which, when made visible, is an embarrassment to many, but whose consequences fail to penalize all equally, often having no negative effect at all on those most embarrassed. Others are not so lucky: bigotry and hatred ruins lives and limits rights on a daily basis. Public access TV constantly reminds us that as a society we must choose whether to take the problem head-on or to sweep it under the rug until we have an enormous crisis.

Of all the unique and valuable services offered by public access TV, perhaps the greatest is the opportunity for local communities to establish a dialogue, identify problems and find solutions. If we choose to use this powerful tool to address and resolve bigotry and hatred and to celebrate diversity, then public access channels may have reached their greatest potential and we as human beings may have started to reach ours.

Alan Bushong,
Public Policy Committee Chair,
Alliance for Community Media

Alan is also executive director of Capital Community Television, 585 Liberty St., Salem, OR 97308-2342. Telephone 503/588-2288.

International Update

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The International Committee is the Alliance's organizational link to community-based media globally. It is a conduit for the flow of information. Our regional International Committee chairs are the key points for disseminating this information to the Alliance membership. They are also the pathways for communication between local, national and international. Without question, the challenge of bringing international home remains daunting. The process of educating ourselves to each other, locally and globally, remains constant. We can, however, face the challenge with a long-term view of its reward, knowing we are participants in securing the future of access to telecommunications media "in all communities and nations of the world".

Below is a selection of organizations and resources which provide a variety of information ranging from the recent history of community media developments internationally, to current issues, conferences and projects. The International Committee encourages contact with any or all of the following.

Reference Materials:

"Video the Changing World"

Edited by Nancy Thede and Alain Ambrosi
(see Videazimut)

"Local Radio and Television in Europe"

Edited by Nick Jankowski, Ole Prehn & James Stappers,
John Libbey Media Books
Contact: John Libbey & Co.Ltd., Tel: 08 947 2777
London, England

"ZAPBOOK"

Produced by PARADISO Amsterdam
Contact: Helen Vreedevelde - Tel: 3 20 626 452

Weteringschans 6-8
07 SG Amsterdam, Netherlands

Organizations

International Media Resource Exchange (IMRE)

Contact: Karen Ranucci - Tel: 212 463 0108
24 Washington Place
New York, New York 004
(see IMRE's Latin American resource directory)

Georg Ritter - Tel: 0732 23 2 09
STADTWERKSTATT
U Kircheng 4
A - 4040 LINZ
Austria

Olivier Pasquet - Tel: 33 79 38 0 24
TVTV
BP 2 73720 QUIEGE
France

Ted Weisberg - Tel: 08 642 35 35
Filmcentrum
Folkungagatan 80 B
1 16 22 Stockholm, Sweden
(Organizer for 1994 Video Olympics, Scandinavia)

Videazimut

General Secretariat - Tel: 514 982 6660
3680 rue Jeanne-Mance, bur 430
Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2X 2K5

Black Workshops

Jeffrey Morris
Unit 215 Highbury Workshop
22 Highbury Grove
London N5 2EA, England

Karen Helmersen chairs the Alliance's International Committee. She is Deputy Director of Film/Video Arts, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003. Telephone 212/673-9361.

Unique Fabrics from Identical Threads

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plicated institution that is not yet worldwide, the process of struggling for can itself have a positive impact since it will likely lead to diversity of methodology which can be as valuable as the diversity of voices and nations. All of us appreciate the progress made thus far, but realize that there is still much work to be done.

As we are all aware, our ability to communicate one with another as individuals, groups and as nations is the fulcrum about which human progress and world peace will pivot in the coming decades. The most basic premise of the tool of public, educational and government access to telecommunications is that this unique forum can provide the information, ideas and exchange needed for the empowerment of people to begin to make progressive changes in their lives, in their communities and in the world. It is that lofty potential of this tool of international human progress and freedom that inspired this year's convention theme which explores the many human similarities within a culturally diverse global community. Let's begin the exploration here in this issue.

T. Andrew is executive director of the Alliance for Community Media.

Amend Access First

*We have inherited a tradition of apathy, passivity,
and alienation in the sphere of public policy.*

*Access Television is a tool to be used to reverse these
trends by promoting speech and interaction.*

By Elliot Margolies

What's the single most valuable aspect of Access Television? Is it the empowerment when somebody learns to operate video equipment? Is it the completion and cablecast of a television program made by an ordinary citizen? Or is it the communication which happens when someone puts his/her message on the channel and someone at home watches, listens, and reacts to that message? At Mid-Peninsula Access Corporation (MPAC) in California we have chosen the latter as our guide because we feel it does the most to vitalize and strengthen our community.

Linking Atherton, East Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Palo Alto, and Stanford, MPAC's Channel 6 encompasses a challenging spectrum of ethnic populations and socioeconomic strata which mirrors both the diversity and polarized qualities of our society-at-large. Atherton, which is 95 percent white, is one of the richest towns in the country while East Palo Alto, which is 88 percent minority, is nearly bankrupt and earned the unwanted distinction of Murder Capital of the U.S. in 1992. Throw Stanford University into the mix with its international student body and renowned faculty, and it's easy to see why MPAC is an exciting place to work. Our service area is practically a laboratory for communications projects.

We want to bring people of diverse backgrounds and orientations face-to-face in dialogue. We want to provide a forum for regional problem solving and sharing of resources. We want the many different ethnic groups to use the channel in their own image – for their own sense of pride and validation. We want to facilitate interactive communication highways between schools and families, government officials and their constituents, citizens and police. We want community issues to be debated by all who have a stake and opinion. We want to create opportunities for at-risk youth and plug them into a community process.

Does such a content-driven agenda fly in the face of the Access mission? Some would say yes. Once you start down the slippery path of shaping content on the community channel, it will compromise your duty to provide an open forum for free speech. Even if no resident is denied his/her right to make whatever program he/she wishes, we may be exerting a form of censorship by preferential allocation of resources and thereby inhibiting a range of speech that would otherwise happen. At MPAC we believe there is an even greater inhibitor of speech on our access channels which is inherent in the very means of video production itself.

Many of us sought jobs in Access because we recognized its potential to offer a voice for those who were not represented on commercial media and because we believed it would broaden the marketplace of ideas and enhance the practice of democracy. These were, in fact, the reasons offered by the FCC for the establishment of Access channels on cable. When we put out our shingles years ago we were gratified by the number of people who came in to learn video and produce shows. Yet many of those who made it through the doors first came either because they were interested in video equipment, wanted to acquire career skills, or create a pilot show which some network would just die for. Our time has been consumed by administrating, facilitating, and publicizing these productions even as our channels acquired the social import of chopped liver. While many such programs are well crafted and net Hometown awards, they can't justify our existence.

Many Access directors abandoned the purist notion of "first come, first served" and began targeted outreach campaigns to bring in a range of producers who would reflect the cultural and philosophical diversity of the community. I imagine that most of us have seen many groups who were wild about our outreach presentations only to

Continued next page

The Message, the Medium and the Movement

Public access television emerged in the U.S. in the late 1960s and early 1970s as a model of democratic communication that was based on diversity of information, ease of entry into the marketplace of ideas, the free circulation of ideas and broad community interaction and debate. It was to be the "town hall" of public communication, a return to a model of face-to-face community deliberations and democracy that was threatened by an increasingly monolithic and insensitive telecommunications industry. In describing the origins of the movement, Ralph Engelman writes, "'Access' became the rallying cry for a new conception of television as a tool of empowerment, as a means for fostering a more responsive government and a more democratic culture."

Twenty years later we have cause to pause and reflect on our mission and strategies. We are faced with a dizzying array of developments in communications technology, a rapidly changing international telecommunications landscape and an increasingly constrictive climate of regulation and public policy. We see trends in access such as the shift from public to private expression and the increased emphasis on production value and worry about losing the vision of democratic participation, community development and public dialogue. We ask ourselves (and each other). . .public access. . .why and how? Where are we? Where should we be going? What sort of vision will get us there?

This issue of CTR speaks to *why* access is important and illustrates *how* different regions, groups and individuals view and do access. Woven throughout the issue is the theme of empowerment – from developing media literacy to encouraging agency through training strategies, and from amending our current strategy for developing participation to assessing and celebrating our outcomes. We offer a number of PEG access case studies, some vision papers, and some practical information to encourage networking among like-minded access folk. Our goal is to spark dialogue and action around the linkage between vision and practice. We hope you will continue the dialogue.

– Bob Devine & Jesikah maria ross
Editors-in-Chief

Organizations

AMARC is the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters. The organization publishes *Interadio* three times a year dealing with democratization of the media and the development of community radio worldwide. They also prepare and distribute publications dealing with such things as *The International Women's Network of AMARC Resource Directory*, *Air-waves for a Pluralist Africa*, *Report on Participatory Radio in Southern Africa*, and *Tuning into a New History of the Americas*.

**AMARC Secretariat
3575 boul. St. Laurent,
#704, Montréal, Québec
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Union for Democratic Communication strives to link critical researchers in communications, information and media issues with producers, practitioners and activists in those fields. While other communications conferences and groups occasionally include critical work on their agendas, the UDC is the only organization where progressive research, production and practice comprise the purpose of the group. UDC publishes the *Newsletter, Democratic Communiqué*.

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drop the ball at some point along the production route. Common pitfalls: 1) they can't come up with nine people to operate the studio, 2) they take classes but never produce a show, 3) they give up during the editing process.

It took a long time to realize that video production itself gets in the way of our vision for the communication potentials of access channels. I started making videos in 1974 with all the clunky black and white open reel equipment, the whole while saying "Wow, with this kind of portability, it's only a matter of time before we're a nation of grassroots producers!" Seventeen years later, with an access center chock full of High 8 camcorders, I realize that the equipment could become pocket-knife size and it would still be hard to make a program. It takes time and energy. Editing means telling a story which in turn involves the torturous process of writing, even if it's done with buttons and oxides instead of ink and paper. Many organizations who would love a forum to present the ideas they hold dear cannot muster up the production crews - especially for a studio series. Let's face it, the free speech forum we have set up works best for those who have the time and energy, the people power, the writing background, and even the money/leisure to learn and do video production. It's not an even playing field for everyone.

There is another compelling reason to make sure that the community channel carries programming that reaches people and makes a difference. Local governments can cut off the funds for access if they see no value in it relative to other community needs.

The Cable Act of 1984 put into question the survival of access TV facilities when it gave city councils the choice of funding them or not, even as it relieved cable companies of any obligation to underwrite access operations. Throw a trillion dollar national debt into the equation, which has trickled down into every city budget, and it's clear that the survival of Access is still an iffy situation. The fallout of the cable act and Reaganomics has only just begun to materialize for many Access facilities who had franchise contracts which carried them into the '90s.

Six access producers from San Leandro, California, including the producers of "Johnny and the UFOs" and "The Exotics" which featured exotic animals, discovered this ominous reality early on. On a summer night in 1987 they watched the final curtain come down on their programs with a 6 to 1 vote by the city council who did not want to spend any part of its franchise fee revenues to support community access. United Cable had foot the bill to run Access for San Leandro for the previous 15 years, but when it came time to relicense they told the San Leandro fathers to ante up or fold. Access folded.

In nearby Sunnyvale, after a study of PEG Access TV, the City Council decided not to institute public access TV for its residents, because it would be more prudent to direct the franchise fee revenues toward

other city needs. In Sacramento, where producers have won dozens of national awards for high quality programs, the attorney for the County Cable Commission argues that public access should be scaled down to a simple and cheap electronic soap-box providing residents an opportunity to record their opinions. MPAC began operating in post-Cable Act-1990 with a channel that serves four municipalities. Though we have convinced them to invest in MPAC not one of them wanted to call it franchise fee money. We must request support from the general fund each year.

When Access Directors stand in front of the council at budget time - shoulder to shoulder with their counterparts from the senior citizen center, the libraries, the community theatre and the police - it just won't due to brag about how many people graduated from the video classes or how many times the cameras went out. Even if the number is high relative to other Access facilities it probably represents only a tiny fraction of the community-at-large. We are now asking for a share of the public's money and we must demonstrate that the Access facility is creating a community value. Principled language about the First Amendment might help, but we had better be able to present some evidence that what went out over our channels made a difference in the community.

We have taken the following steps to demonstrate potentials of community television and make certain that the channel is perceived as a vital communications organ for many in the community.

➤ 1) We write grants for special demonstration projects on the channel and for targeted outreach campaigns;

➤ 2) We produce forums and multicultural presentations;

● 3) We provide a volunteer studio crew for those who wish to make an interactive studio program;

➤ 4) We are building an 'auto pilot studio' (like in Tampa and Chicago) where one may be able to engage the public with less than an hour of training;

➤ 5) We locate volunteer videographers and editors to help organizations who ask for coverage of lectures and forums;

➤ 6) We build organizational coalitions to jointly produce and cross-promote program series (i.e. environmental groups, women's groups, health care providers; etc.) and provide them a volunteer studio crew;

➤ 7) We conduct candidate forums for most races, with call-ins from viewers and questions from a citizen panel in the studio;

➤ 8) We preempt programming and mount live call-in forums during times of crisis. (i.e. reaction to the Rodney King verdict; multiple shootings in East Palo Alto);

➤ 9) We are developing an ongoing, facilitated workshop on Channel 6, enabling people of different backgrounds and orientations to confront their stereotypes and differences in a public process;



MPAC Staff brainstorms in the Out-of-Control Room.

Obviously a council might turn against an Access facility for showing controversial programming, no matter how much communication had been generated throughout the community by the channel. There is no guarantee that any amount of community dialogues and cultural presentations will translate into support from elected officials. Government funding should not be the primary motive for developing the kind of approaches listed above.

Our wake up call was the Gulf War. There was no question in our minds that at such a time of crisis, Channel 6 ought to become a forum for people's reflections and emotions. The war erupted less than a year into our operations and at that point we had no studio and not many producers. We wired a camcorder directly into the cable system, drafted our two-line office phone into community service and initiated the first of many live, interactive programs. The phone kept ringing with callers of all ages and persuasions; others came over to our makeshift studio to make a statement on camera and participate in one of the least sophisticated, but most important TV shows in Channel 6 history.

We struggle to balance our traditional role as access providers with our intention to develop the infrastructures that will increase the diversity of speakers, promote interaction, and serve the community in specific ways. We grapple with how much staff time to devote to initiating programs and what format a staff driven program should have. We know that whatever topics we choose and whatever guests we invite imprints program content, but we are careful to structure shows in a way to give citizens a voice rather than producing MPAC documentaries or magazine shows. We believe that in time MPAC's role as a producer will recede as more and more of the groups who have taken part in MPAC "INTERACT" shows will utilize the facilities completely on their own terms.

How much do we determine our direction based on where the foundation money is? Does a particular project or enterprise seem attractive because of the money and growth or because of our vision for MPAC? We need only look to PBS to see a mission compromised by the need to survive and the desire to grow.

The First Amendment, like the constitution it is a part of, provides an enlightened structure for society. But that glorious document, encased in glass in some museum does not guarantee an enlightened, participatory democracy. There is a huge gap between theory and practice. For those who dream of a truly vibrant marketplace of ideas and a society where citizens care more about choices before their city council than choosing Pepsi or Coke, there is much work to be done. In our zeal we will make mistakes and sometimes go too far in shaping program content on the channels. At times we will sabotage our own goal of empowering others. But for the present we are living in a society nearly split apart by the wedges between disparate populations. We have inherited a tradition of apathy, passivity, and alienation in the sphere of public policy. Access Television is a tool to be used to reverse these trends by promoting speech and interaction. We will need to re-examine our activism in the light of the First Amendment, but not now. If Access Television is to make a difference in our society then we need to roll up our sleeves and prime the pump.

Elliott Margolies is executive director of the Mid-Peninsula Access Corporation serving four cities south of San Francisco. He sews red buttons inside sidewalk cracks hoping they will sprout into access producers. In 1965, he competed in Peoria, Ill's citywide spelling bee, but was eliminated by the word 'apathy'. He thought it had an 'e'. He can be reached at MPAC, 3200 Park Blvd., Palo Alto, CA 94306. Telephone 415/494-8686.

Participatory Communication

"...the main objective of participatory communication is not to produce media materials per se, but to use a process of media production to empower people with the confidence, skills and information they need to tackle their issues and to provide them with the media tools necessary to articulate their experience and intentions."

— from *Seeing and Showing Ourselves: A Guide to Using Small Format Video Tape as a Participatory Tool for Development* (New Delhi: CENDIT, 1991)

Books of Interest

Dom Carisiti, *Expanding Free Expression in the Marketplace: Broadcasting and the Public Forum*. New York: Quorum Books, 1992. Develops an historical and legal perspective on access to the media, and makes the case for extending the access provision to broadcasting.

Slavko Splichal and Janet Wasko, eds., *Communication and Democracy*. Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex, 1993. A collection of articles dealing with "New Visions of Communication and Democracy," and presenting a variety of international case studies.

"The Little Village that Could"

- Population: 3,978
- Franchise income under \$10,000
- No paid staff
- Cablecasting locally produced material.

By Ruth Cowperthwaite

Cable came to our town some time ago. The local municipal building was equipped for access cablecasting and the inevitable bulletin board ran 'round the clock day in and day out. This was the situation when a small group gathered to see "what can we do to utilize this channel and create a media outlet for the local citizenry?" Several of us had some experience in other access channels, one had some film courses in his background, but most came with little more than ideas of what ought to be.

An annual budget of less than \$10,000 precluded the possibility of hiring staff or renting decent space. Liability insurance required by the Village Council took a significant chunk. The remaining funds were used to purchase equipment and supplies. The Village government provided us with a closet (literally) which housed the head-end and the cameras. No studio was available, so everything was taped and run on the channel at a later time.

Our first efforts included taping Council meetings and School Board meetings, local events such as street fairs and the farmers' market, and some interviews. The local college contributed tapes of visiting lecturers and panel discussions of current issues known as "Friday Forums". We played tapes, and still do, on a "first come, first served" basis without regard to content other than the basic "no-no's" of access.

That was four years ago and we're still functioning entirely with volunteer help. Our programming has expanded and gotten more creative. One volunteer concentrates on the protest activities over the burning of toxic waste at a nearby cement plant. Another interviews older women (70+ years) and has completed nearly 30. Another person will interview anybody about anything by taking them down to a local pond and simply chatting and strolling while the birds sing and the winds blow, or don't blow, and an occasional kid or dog wanders into the picture. He calls this show *Once Around the Pond*, and he has a camera person who is adept at walking backwards while keeping the camera level and focused. Another person works with high school kids who do a live call-in show once a week, and yes, they go too far every now and then and big discussions result. One of our shows, prepared for the local Mediation Group, was a finalist in Hometown USA competition in the government category.

A recently-begun show features



Virginia Hamilton, Jim Rose and the red-headed puppet "Reddi Reader" star on the *Book Garden* series on Channel 8 in Yellow Springs.

Public Access

For starters, we play one tape of programs each day and we repeat it six times – twice in the daytime, twice in the evening, and twice in the wee small hours of the morning (the local insomniacs are very appreciative). The bulletin board fills the rest of the time, but it has been brightened with ever-changing quips, quotes, and poetry pertinent to the season or the current event. People ENJOY our bulletin board thanks to another dedicated volunteer.

We have a channel manager and we have an assistant manager, both of whom belong to that growing group of people who no longer work for a paycheck. Both of them have always loved electronic "toys". One or the other comes in each morning, programs the tape for the day, checks the equipment that has come in or prepares the equipment that is scheduled to go out, answers questions, maybe makes an appointment for one-on-one training. They may return, later in the day, to help others with a complicated setup. Or do a shoot themselves!

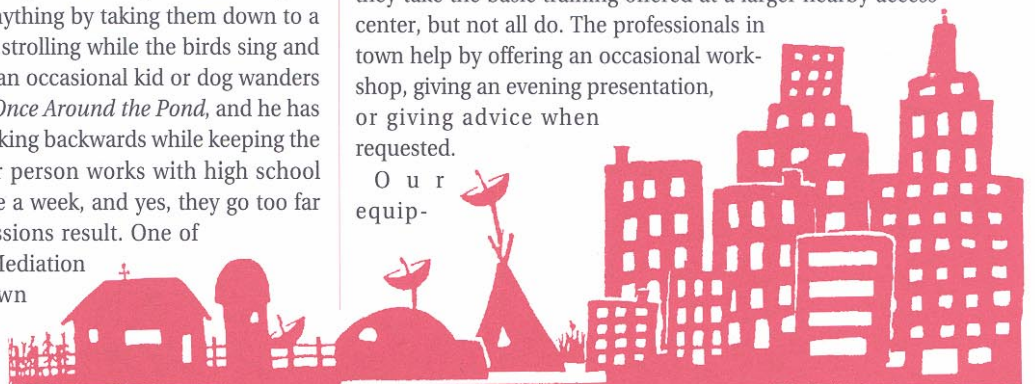
Our volunteers can pick up or return equipment any time of the day or night by picking up keys from the police dispatcher who has a list of certified people. The equipment is cared for and treated respectfully. It is a point of pride that our original camera is still with us and doing yeoman service.

Training consists of certification by the channel managers and by working with a more experienced person. We recommend to each that they take the basic training offered at a larger nearby access center, but not all do. The professionals in town help by offering an occasional workshop, giving an evening presentation, or giving advice when requested.

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equip-

home videos. People are invited to submit short segments, three to five minutes, of any subject they wish – the kid's birthday party, a vacation trip, the family cat, a cook-out. These are grouped into a 30-60 minute show with a host who reads the descriptive material submitted with the tape and comments on the content. It is our hope that this show will not only increase the viewing audience, but will also encourage more people to pick up a camera (theirs or ours) and get involved.

And how do we manage with no paid staff?



ment now includes an edit bay, a special effects generator, a title generator, a switcher that allows us to do on-line editing, and of course, more cameras, lights and microphones. We have our own room (11 X 7) which houses all of the above including some files and the head-end. For a studio, we share a meeting room with other organizations. We can go "live" from three different areas: the Council room, the studio/meeting room, and the auditorium/gymnasium.

We've been asked how we manage to acquire and maintain dedicated volunteers. Part of the answer lies in our focus on "community service". People who might not come forth to "learn video", will join up "if needed", and learning video becomes a by-product. The pressure is off to be technically expert and sophisticated. The content of the show is the most important element and no amount of expertise can help a basically boring program. The desire to grow, to expand, to improve comes as experience and confidence grow.

And camaraderie is an essential ingredient. We work in teams, are supportive of each other's efforts, and meet periodically to exchange experiences, to laugh at our problems, and to set new goals and directions.

Our viewing audience is growing, and different elements within the community are exposed to what other groups are thinking and doing. Many people believe that everyone in a small town knows everyone else and all about them. They are absolutely and unequivocally wrong! Crossing the communication lines between the various social and economic groups is perhaps the biggest contribution our access channel makes to the community.

But more important is the fact that a communication pathway exists, all tooled up and ready to go for the person(s) who want to put forth a new concept, who want to say something that needs to be said, who want a soap box from which they may be better heard.

● *Tip to those who would like to know how many people are watching: Go "live" with the video of an important meeting like our Council meeting, underlaid with the audio track from a Buddhist cooking show. We did just that, inadvertently, and we found far more people were watching than we had realized!*

Ruth Cowperthwaite is Program Coordinator for Channel 8 Access in Yellow Springs, Ohio. She may be reached at Channel 8, Yellow Springs, OH 45387. Telephone 513/767-1188.

That's for the Midwest to Know and the Coasts to Find Out

By Mike Henry

Salina, (pronounced 'Sal-eye-na'), would be considered a rural midwestern town of 45,000 inhabitants. To my friends in L.A., it would be considered a quaint spot in the land of Oz! However, Salina is the cultural and economic center of northwestern Kansas, with over 100 miles between it and the nearest largest city. This quiet, stable community has a strong self-identity, boasting vigorous support of the arts, low unemployment, little crime and pretty parks. Because Salina has very poor reception of broadcast TV, we have nearly 90 percent penetration on the cable system managed by TCI. Last year, the city and TCI completed refranchising. Sue Buske and Joe Van Eaton put together an effective blueprint for a non-profit PEG access facility. Still, I was surprised to see this kind of facility in this size market.

Community Access Television of Salina is a start-up PEG facility. The city has provided 6,000 square feet in an old city building with lots of history. We have four full time and four part-time staff members, three edit bays, three field cameras, a remote production van and a 1,400 square foot studio, with a 14' lighting grid, a curved cyclorama, 25' of chroma key blue curtain, 150' of blacks and the historical brick of Memorial Hall.

One of the most exciting aspects of the franchise was the fiber optic network routed through the access center. This I-Net will be used as a data network and a point-to-point full motion video network for interactive education in the schools, city and businesses, as well as live remote feeds for the access center.

Of course, all this means nothing without community involvement. We have taken the grand opening approach to starting up the access center, which means we did not start programming until we had the majority of facilities in place and one weeks worth of programs ready. Currently, we have trained 215 volunteer crew members and producers, who have put together 72 programs. These programs were held until our grand opening May 31. The support and enthusiasm has been fantastic. I didn't think it would be possible, but we cablecast 47 hours of 100 percent local programming during the first week of operation!

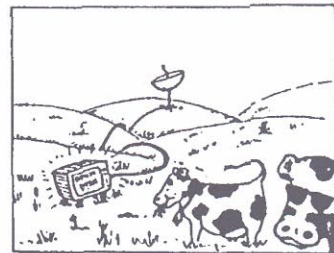
This is very different from my previous work in Pasadena and L.A. The difference may be the effect of small town dynamics, coupled with high penetration and a strong community identity. When I first came to town the editor of the *Salina Journal* said: "We need you. If people in this town get all their information and entertainment from WGN and CNN, they will lose interest in their own community." An example of the kind of impact access provides is the live election coverage. We were the only live television source during the fall '92 and spring '93 election. The newspaper and radio broadcasters have been very supportive because we help keep the focus on Salina.

This community seems to understand that community access television means communication rather than television. We have received wonderful letters and cards. Some notes express thanks for helping to get the word out and others are grateful that attention is finally being paid to events and activities here in town.

Small town dynamics contribute to a great deal of enthusiasm for access. People want to trust each other, meet each other, understand each other and find ways to relate to each other. In this community of 45,000, people want to encourage a neighborhood feeling and build family relations.

There is something very special happening here in the Midwest. The people of Salina are really tuned in to Community Access Television. They understand the importance of community involvement and sharing ideas using this technology. I like to quote Carl Kucharski in our Producer's Class: "Access is not television, it's communication." In L.A. that comment would lead to debate, here it is met with understanding. I'm not really sure what it is...maybe it's because people wave at each other. Whatever it is, it's for the Midwest to now and for the coasts to find out.

Mike Henry is executive director at Community Access Television of Salina Inc. PO Box 645, 410 W. Ash St., Salina, KS 67401. He can be reached at 913/823-2500.



Public Access

Diversity and Outreach in Manhattan

Grassroots Caucus

The Alliance for Community Media maintains a Grassroots Caucus to bring the grassroots into fuller participation in the Alliance and the community media movement.

"Grassroots" includes small access centers, low budget organizations, community access television volunteers, independent producers, and those who have been traditionally denied access to the mainstream media.

Among its goals are to increase membership in the Alliance, to ensure that the Alliance provides services which meet grassroots needs, to ensure Alliance activities and services are accessible and affordable, to ensure participation by the grassroots in all levels of the Alliance, and to assist standing committees in targeting, organizing and mobilizing the grassroots to help achieve the Alliance's goals.

The Caucus will be meeting at the national convention in Atlanta.

For more information on the Grassroots Caucus, contact Fiona Boneham, 480 6th Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11215. Telephone 718/768-5999.

By Victor Sanchez

Manhattan Neighborhood Network (MNN) is the new CAO (Community Access Organization) in Manhattan responsible for the administration of public access television throughout Manhattan. MNN is an independent, not-for-profit organization established as a result of the cable franchise agreement between The City of New York and Time-Warner and Paragon cable companies.

In September of 1992, Manhattan Neighborhood Network assumed the responsibility of playing back programs produced for the access channels in Manhattan. This was an enormous first step for MNN in creating support services out of this new independent cable access office. What made this first step enormous

is that we inherited over 500 hours of programs from existing producers who had program agreements with the two cable companies that administered the access channels before we came along. Establishing Manhattan Neighborhood Network, and offering support services is a challenge. Manhattan is desperate for help after years of non-support for producers who supplied the programs that then and now give public access in Manhattan a notorious reputation. The reputation that the access channels have has divided my job as Director of Education and Outreach into three areas: Explaining what public access is, why it 'looks' the way that it does, and how an individual or group can become involved.

I find that wherever I go I spend time in outreach meetings explaining why public access looks (style and content) the way that it does. In a large urban metropolis like New York, what public access looks like now, and what it will be after various outreach efforts is many different things to different communities. Over the past year I've heard Puerto Ricans in East Harlem tell me that the large number of programs made by producers from the Dominican Republic looks like another example that 'they' are taking over. In Harlem, a young person said that he feels that public access always looks like 'the crazy people you see on the streets', and entrenched access producers say our outreach efforts will result

in program that will look like, 'socially engineered programming'.

Our main outreach effort right now as an organization is to create a presence for grass roots groups on the public access channels. For example after 20 years of public access in Manhattan, women's groups, senior citizens or youth groups and programs dealing with issues of homelessness and affordable housing are nearly invisible on MNN's four channels. Why would organizations desperate to reach those in

need of its services never use public access TV? Usually the Executive Director or Outreach Coordinator of a Community Based Organization (CBO) will tell me that (1) No one has ever told them how to become involved with public access or asked them to join a workshop that will teach them the skills



Staff and clients of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance against Defamation (GLAAD) at a MNN sponsored workshop.

necessary for video production, and (2) They are not sure that they want to be on public access because it's just for 'weirdos', and in addition this group and the community they are in are outside the boundaries of what people call the safe part of town, 96th Street to 14th Street, which already labels them as being on the fringe economically and politically, and to be on access would lead to further marginalizing of their group. Besides, as one community activist told me, "no one watches that stuff anyway".

My response is to offer up ways in which they can work with MNN. In the past this has begun with a workshop where students (actually clients of

the CBO) produce a PSA around an issue with which the CBO deals. From a CBO in predomi-

nantly Spanish speaking Lower East

Side we held a bilingual workshop. From this came a PSA asking for racial harmony and community peace. The Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center in Greenwich Village produced two PSAs, one encouraging lesbians to join an advocacy group called "The Lesbian Avengers", and the other encouraging safe sex practices. These two PSAs play regularly on Gay and Lesbian programs on MNN.

Now we are looking for CBOs that would be interested in a more extensive workshop. One that will result in programs longer than PSAs. For example we

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are now working with The Coalition of Battered Women Advocates, a group in Manhattan that helps battered women with shelter, counseling programs and information on their legal rights and ways to insure their health, safety and recovery. We are designing a video skills workshop for women that use the services of the coalition. The workshop will take place on site at the office and shelters of the coalition. The Hi-8 equipment that they will train on will live at the shelters and offices so that these woman can have access to a camcorder whenever they feel the need to record and document their lives. The post-production work is to be done at MNN. The instructor for the project is bilingual and she herself has made a video examining the lives of four women who have recovered from physical abuse at the hands of their spouses. Her role will be that of a consultant, watching what has been taped, making sure that the participants are learning video skills while producing a piece that will be shown on the access channels. We hope that this will lead to the Coalition for Battered Women Advocates producing for the public access channels. If this method is successful we feel it will inspire other organizations to see the impact of powerful community produced television for Manhattan.

Another outreach effort is a request for proposals we held for CBOs not involved with public access. This would give organizations \$25,000 to set up training workshops and access to equipment on a neighborhood level. We hope that the ten groups that we fund this year will plant the seeds for more extensive outreach efforts on a local level in the future. Places where people can find public access in their neighborhood, something they have never been able to do before. Some of the more successful training programs that respond to our Request For Proposals may be considered as future satellite access centers. As positive as these projects sound, some producers who have been on public access in Manhattan a long time view these attempts at outreach with great skepticism. One producer looked aghast when we explained our grant program to him. He complained that giving equipment and support to people who have never been on access before was very risky and a potential waste of money and resources. Another replied disdainfully that all this would result in was safe, 'socially engineered programming' and not an increase in diversity of community use of the channels. Unfortunately in Manhattan eclectic programming has passed for diverse programming for far too long.

We feel quite differently. We feel that these outreach efforts will result in bringing public access into areas of Manhattan that have never heard of it, seen it or known that they can be a part of it. And what's wrong with that.

Victor Sanchez was born and raised in New York and is Director of Education and Outreach for the Manhattan Neighborhood Network. He can be reached c/o MNN, 10th Floor, 110 East 23rd St., New York, NY 10010. Telephone 212/260-2670.

CiTV

A Local Alternative to Traditional Television

By Laura Greenfield

When people think about a government access channel, they probably envision a local C-Span, government meeting coverage and a few public affairs talk shows promoting city services; but CityTV of Santa Monica is taking a radical departure from that model endeavoring to broaden that narrow approach to programming. Sure, CityTV covers City Council, Planning Commission and Rent Control Board, does a Current Affairs Magazine and a monthly issue-oriented call-in series; but there is also alternative programming designed to serve an underserved media audience.

Government Access

Santa Monica's unique cable channel strives to provide 'socially responsible TV' by programming for seniors, children, the disabled community, and multicultural groups that are often neglected by the mainstream traditional media. Regular programs also include daily arts and environmental specials.

Another unique aspect of CityTV's philosophy is to feature productions created by independent producers. Some are hired on a freelance basis to create original works commissioned by CityTV, while others are selected for equipment access grants. CityTV owns Betacam SP field systems; an A-B roll 3/4 Betacam edit system with a pro-Betacam SP edit deck, Dubner, Amiga Toaster and Multitrack audio; a three-camera remote truck; an automated camera system for meeting coverage; and off-line editing facilities. This high end professional equipment helps to attract many producers eager for the opportunity to produce their works. Equipment grant recipients are given free equipment access in exchange for non-exclusive rights to cablecast their programs on CityTV. The independent producer retains the copyright.

All producers are encouraged to market their works and distribute them outside of CityTV as a way to generate revenue for the station, and to cover their own expenses. Even commissioned producers are encouraged to participate in distribution deals and are paid commissions for marketing their programs.

In this manner the station has attracted a talented pool of 'indies' who are continuing to raise the level of production at CityTV. CityTV has won more than 50 awards for our outstanding programming since going on-the-air in December of 1988, including the Hometown USA Video festival award for Overall Excellence in Government Access in 1992.

CityTV could not have achieved this degree of success without the full support of the City of Santa Monica who recognized the potential of the media to do more than promote City services and serve the City's public relations needs. There are community needs served by CityTV that go beyond the scope of most access channels which cater either to programmers' needs (governmental or educational institutions) or users' needs (public access empowerment and freedom of speech). CityTV attempts to serve potential audience needs.

Public access channels, because of their First Amendment commitment and priority, cannot possibly consider viewers' needs as their primary objective. Of course, they can encourage viewers to also become users, and can strive for a wide diversity of viewpoints; empowering the local community to use the media as a tool of expression. Public access, by its very nature cannot guarantee that all audiences are served. Public access channels, due to their 'first come, first served' policies contain programs of varying quality and professionalism. Government channels and other institutional 'access' channels differ in that programmers

Access to Government

The term "Government Access" was originally conjured up in the context of developing the 1972 Federal Communications Commission "Report and Order," which sought, among other things, to define minimal provisions for local programming on cable systems. The Report established that the jurisdiction should have access to a channel(s) on the cable system for governmental programming. This was a functional definition at the time, and gave many of us a framework to develop municipal programming.

I would submit that the "government access" concept has matured to take on a new, more meaningful definition. The "access" in the term has more to do with the public's access to government than the government's access to a channel. It is then, or should be, less a definition of who's in control of the channel than the functionality of the programming on it. A channel representing the government should be a means of communication between its residents, and the elected and appointed officials of public agencies at all levels of government.

—Andy Beecher, Institutional Services Manager, Metropolitan Area Communications Commission, Beaverton, OR

At HOM-TV in Meridian Township, Michigan

By Ben Stark

HOM-TV Channel 21 is the government access cable television station serving the Charter Township of Meridian, which is located about five miles from Lansing, Michigan. We have just moved into a new facility after seven years of using two small offices near a community meeting room as a base of operations. Our new area features an 800 square foot studio along with separate space for full-time staff and for videotape storage.

The call letters of 'HOM-TV' were designed to reflect the community which we serve and the local-programming philosophy we follow. This township has been identified for decades with the villages of Haslett and Okemos, with the governing municipality historically taking a low profile. Years ago, residents would say they live in Haslett or Okemos, rather than Meridian Township. Hence the 'H', 'O', and the 'M', pronounced as 'HOME-TEE-VEE' to underline our priority for local ('home-grown') programs. Part of our programming policy stipulates that programming of a non-local origin is to be cablecast by special exception only, and only when packaged with local segments at the beginning and end of the segment. We attempt to allow our video production equipment to become the 'eyes and ears' for the community through our programming. An example of this philosophy is the inclusion of 'reaction shots' in Township meeting coverage. We know that 93 percent of communication content is non-verbal, and we try to let our viewers follow these messages by showing more than just the primary speaker during meetings.

HOM-TV presents live coverage of about 80 local governmental meetings per year, averaging about 2-1/2 hours each. Live meetings are normally followed by a "post-meeting report" which includes a brief summary of actions and a short interview with a board of commission member. Meeting coverage is produced on 3/4 inch videotape with three Sony DXC-3000 cameras and a Chyron VP-2 for graphics.

HOM-TV produced extensive coverage of the 1992 elections in Meridian Township. All seven positions of the Township Board and all six positions of the Township Park Commission were decided, first at the Primary Election in August, and finally at the General Election in November. All Township candidates were invited to participate in our coverage, along with several from the county and state levels, and a few candidates for U.S. Congress. The result was the 'Campaign 92' series, which included 89 different programs related to the 1992 elections. Sixty-seven of these were half-hour interviews with candidates running for various offices. There were also nine hour-long call-in shows with candidates and six candidate forums and debates. The programs were played with high frequency during the weeks immediately pre-

ceding each election for a total of 535 programming hours (about 100 hours per week). A total of 80 percent of township candidates participated in the series. HOM-TV also produced 13 hours of live coverage on Election nights in August and November.

We also produce a wide range of other programming on a weekly basis, including 'Meridian Magazine', a half-hour magazine format news show. This program presents a variety of subjects, such as community education updates, coverage of amateur and professional sports, and extensive reporting on local government issues and actions. We also produce an hour-long call-in show called 'Open Line'. This program features officials from the township, County and State levels on a regular basis, but has also included local residents discussing neighborhood issues. Most recently, we invited residents from the adjoining community to talk about a proposal to 'detach' a portion of their city to become part of Meridian Township. We also focus on residents who have lived in the area for 25 years or more on the *Reflections* series. This program is hosted by local residents.

Other examples of community programming on HOM-TV include the *Meridian Art Gallery*, which features computer-artwork created by a local artist on an Amiga 2000. This is displayed as part of our video bulletin board. *Community Connections* is hosted by local residents who interview other residents on topics ranging from neighborhood watch to health symposiums to school funding. We also offer an 'Editorial' program, in which residents may speak on any topic of their choosing on a weekly basis.

Programs in the past have included topics which have been viewed by some as coming from the "traditional domain" of public access or educational access. These have included a series featuring outstanding students from the area high schools, a *High School Game of the Week* series, a series profiling local business people and their township businesses, and a travel show hosted and produced by local residents. All of these programs were produced with the intent to enhance our program schedule and fill the unmet television needs of the community. (In recent years, the local schools have increased their emphasis on educational access channels, so we have decreased our emphasis on school programs.)

I have been told that we have an 'interesting marriage' between government access and public access programming. We are responsible first and foremost to provide coverage of governmental issues and activities. We view the township as a whole entity to which we are responsible for serving. To the extent that our production capabilities exceed the needs of

Government Access

the local government officials, we expand our programming to more completely meet the needs of the community for access television of various forms. It is our goal in doing this to fill the 'gaps' which exist in the local television programming scene. It is our hope that the existence of such programs on our channel will help to stimulate positive growth of programming on other channels.

HOM-TV is staffed by three full-time professionals with support from a township department secretary. The vast majority of the production work on all of our programs is performed by student interns from Michigan State University, which has one of the leading Telecommunications Departments in the nation. HOM-TV Interns begin on a non-paid basis, usually with little or no prior experience. The Interns run cameras, report, write, edit, and direct on most of our regular programs. Full-time staff typically direct or edit only on special programs. Community volunteers have been accepted to serve as host and producer on short interview segments for *Meridian Magazine* and exclusively for the *Reflections* series.

We have been fortunate to experience a steady budgetary increase over the past decade. The 1983 budget was less than \$50,000. Refranchising in 1988 increased our franchise fee from 3 to 5 percent and the budget climbed to around \$100,000. Population growth in the township and price increases by the cable company have brought our 1993 budget to around \$170,000. These factors are meaningful because of a township ordinance restricting franchise fees specifically to cable television use. Historically the franchise fee directly determines our annual budget.

It has proven to be challenging over the years to provide information to the viewing public about their government and their community from the headquarters of what is at times a very hot political environment. There has been pressure to influence programming decisions exerted behind the scenes by individuals seeking to control the flow of communication on this public channel, but the major threats to the integrity of HOM-TV programming have been averted. We head into the mid-90s with high hopes of exceeding all previous accomplishments with little or no political complications.

Ben Stark has been the Cable Coordinator of Meridian Township since 1984. He may be reached at HOM-TV, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864. Telephone 517/349-1232. He is very fortunate to have Amy Leahy and Diane Lindquist as his assistants.

A Local Alternative

continued from page 11

maintain quality control and serve as 'curators' for their programs and local production efforts. The downside of controlling programming content is that this can lead to the offering of unbalanced opinions or a lack of controversial views on government channels. In general at a municipal channel like CityTV, this is kept in check by the citizens of the city itself who influence how public funds are used to operate the channel. If a program is too controversial at CityTV, for example, it can certainly still find a place on a public access channel.

One of the ways that CityTV has supported this number of high quality programs with a relatively small staff is by offering a television training program for community volunteers. These volunteers work under the guidance of professional independent producers. CityTV has a 'full time equivalent' staff of 6.5 people including administrative staff. Intern trainees are given opportunities to learn all the technical aspects of field production, shooting, lighting, audio and in some cases editing. Interns are also encouraged to produce public service announcements, or short fillers prior to undertaking full length documentary production. Many of the CityTV paid staff and independent producers were hired from our pool of production volunteers.

CityTV is always recruiting new volunteers, soliciting project proposals from independent documentary producers, and looking for high quality programming to showcase our channel. This unique government access channel is very active in establishing program exchanges with other communities and is considering offering their programming via satellite if there is interest/funding from other communities.

Laura Greenfield founded CityTV and has been Cable TV Manager for Santa Monica since 1987. Prior to that, she was Station Manager for the Government Television Channel (GTC3) in Columbus, Ohio, and has been on the staff at two PBS stations, and the faculty of Ohio University. She can be reached at (310) 458-8590, CityTV of Santa Monica, 1685 Main Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401.

NATOA

The National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA) is an affiliate of the National League of Cities. With national membership approaching 500 individuals and agencies representing a broad cross section of telecommunications planners, administrators, regulators, and programmers, NATOA has become a central organization for municipalities and county governments nationwide. Member services include a quarterly newsletter distributed from the national office packed full of ideas and information about technology, telecommunications policies and planning, a monthly newsletter highlighting up-to-date news and activities, and access to a professional network of individuals charting the telecommunications future of municipal and county governments. NATOA's programming committee is comprised of more than 40 members with strong interests in government access programming. The programming committee is currently compiling data from its 1992 government access production and programming survey. For more information about NATOA or the programming committee contact John Risk, Programming Chair, Communications Support Group, Inc., PO Box 10968, Santa Ana, CA 92711. Telephone 714/836-6280. For a copy of the 1992 survey results contact Renee Winsky at 202/626-3160.

Government Special Interest Group (SIG)

This past year, the Alliance's Government SIG has focused on three objectives. First, it has developed a base membership list of those who have demonstrated an interest in Government Access issues and activities. Second, the coordinating committee has represented Government Access in the selection of workshops and speakers for the national convention in Atlanta. Finally, a survey of Government Access operations has been initiated, and will be distributed (if possible) in Atlanta. Want to join us? In Atlanta, look for persons with "red tape" on their name tags or attend our annual meeting. Or, for more information, contact Bob Hardy, 410 E. Washington St., Iowa City, IA 52240. Telephone 319/356-5047.

Educational Access (SIG)

Members of the Education Access SIG form a network to communicate information, initiate shared activities, and promote interests within and outside of the Alliance for Community Media. Some SIG interests include: training and working with students, educational programming, use of I-Nets, programming for in-class viewing, two way video classrooms, and electronic classrooms. All Alliance for Community Media members are eligible to be members of the Education Access SIG. For more information contact Alice French, SIG Coordinator at 806/766-1212.

An educational access channel is important because it provides local schools with a direct link to their communities. It is the only channel on the system that our schools control at the local level. Issues and events that are important in this community are shared with and discussed by people who live and work in this community. Local schools should be actively involved in programming the educational access channel to serve their communication needs. The channel can be used to show viewers what's happening in the local schools, to discuss current issues and problems, to celebrate success stories, and even to ask for input from the community (for two-way communication). The channel can also provide cost-effective means of getting information out to the public, and of providing some coursework that can't be offered to students in more traditional ways.

—Jodie Miller, Educational Coordinator, Northern Dakota County Cable Communications Commission

Access to Excellence

The Germantown, Tennessee Experience

By Frank Bluestein

In 1980, Germantown, Tennessee, an upscale residential community located outside Memphis, began the process of awarding a cable franchise to one of nine applicants seeking to serve the city's needs. As was common in those days, the competition among the firms was fierce. Each

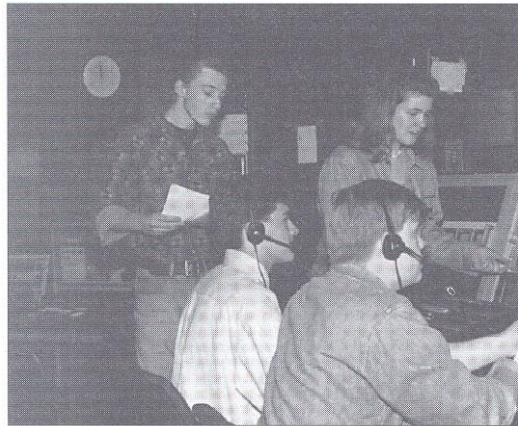
cable company put a different twist on their proposal; however, the one that seemed to gain the most attention came from a little known cable concern from Georgia, Dowden Communications, Inc.

Their bid was unique in two ways. First, it had a 30 percent ownership share divided among six of the city's community leaders. Secondly, the Dowden proposal contained a plan to house the local origination studio for the cable company in the area high school. The school would be responsible for producing the cable company's local origination programming. In return, the school would receive studio equipment, a yearly supply budget, and staff support to maintain the program.

A separate public access studio would be maintained at the cable headquarters.

School officials immediately recognized the potential in this proposal and actively involved themselves in championing the benefits of the Dowden plan to the community. Students and teachers attended meetings, educated themselves and others on the merits of the idea, and lobbied city officials. The battle came down to local ownership and the school versus the bigger cable outfits. After several grueling city council meetings, the Board of Mayor and Alderman, narrowly voted 3-2 to award the franchise to the Dowden Company. Despite a recall vote and outcries from the losing applicants, the Board held firm and a 54 channel, 400 megahertz cable system was up and running by 1982.

Local school officials were elated over the prospect of receiving television technology. They agreed to donate a little used electronics lab in the vocational wing of the school for studio space. The cable company offered to renovate the area and supplement the salary of the theater and communications instructor at the school so that he would serve as programming director for the system. In



June of 1982, consultants from the University of Georgia installed the \$100,000 worth of equipment and helped train the young crew of teachers and students.

Under the direction of the school's communications teacher (who was also now the cable company's programming director) the stu-

dents began to establish one of the most comprehensive television production facilities in the region. The studio proudly adopted the call letters GHS-TV and within a year was producing a wide range of shows for community viewing. A weekly news show, *Germantown News and Views*, featured four anchors, eight packaged segments, and covered local news, sports, the arts, and school events. *Crosstalk*, a weekly interview show, highlighted community leaders and issues. *Cable Quiz*, a student game show, *Comedy Break*, an original series of humorous student material, and *Red Devil Weekly*, a sports information show rounded out the in-studio schedule.

Remote coverage of the weekly football and basketball games were cablecast live complete with anchors, color commentators, field reporters, packaged inserts, and instant replay. Special productions included live election night coverage, guest speeches and forums, coverage of community arts, crafts, and sporting events.

Another feature of the proposal called for a summer student intern program that would pay to train young people at the high school to further develop their video skills. This afforded the students the opportunity to train for leadership positions in their senior year. A student general manager, production coordinator, tape librarian, programming director, and promotions coordinator were all coveted positions that the students vied for.

The studio became so successful that by 1985 the City of Germantown asked the school to consider assuming the responsibility for the public access studio. Despite several attempts to generate interest in public access, the community seemed uninterested. There were several individuals with programming ideas but few with any practical television expertise. The solution seemed obvious – give the school the public access studio equipment, let the students crew the shows, and have

Educational Access

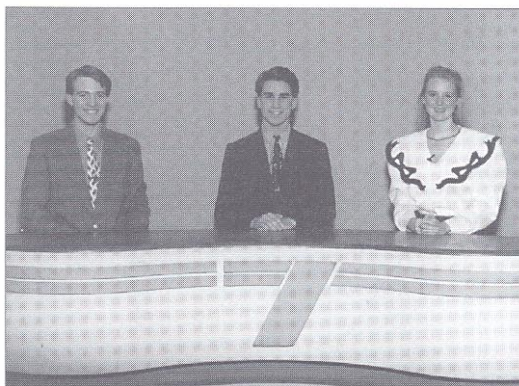
the community citizens produce and host their own programs. Thus was born the Access Together Project. Within a year, six community produced programs sprang into existence with topics as varied as storytelling, medical advice, and fashions of the season. In order to help the school assume the additional burdens and cost for this program, the city government agreed to return a portion of the yearly franchise fee back to the school in the form of major equipment purchases amounting to nearly \$50,000 a year. In this way, the studio could grow as the needs of the community increased. Through the Access Together Project, everyone in the city became a part of the cable access center.

As part of the Access Together Project, the Germantown CATV Commission recommended to the city that all of the access and local origination programs be consolidated over one channel, GHS-TV. The weekly government meetings, which the students were hired to televise, were now switched to the school channel. At almost the same time, the cable operation was sold to the company who operated several of the adjacent suburban communities. Once the headends were consolidated, GHS-TV began cablecasting to subscribers in two additional areas of the county. Recognizing the unique opportunity that now existed at the school, the new owners pledged to upgrade the school facility and to provide automatic insertion equipment to allow for a constant and consistent format. The station began programming over 14 hours a day, much of which was locally produced. The cable company and the school system also agreed to share the cost of a full time engineer. By 1986, the Germantown community could boast that it had its own television station.

Over the years the studio has grown significantly. Last year, a daily 15-minute morning news show was added to the schedule, titled *Wake Up Germantown!*. By June of 1992 it became apparent that the increased activity over the years necessitated a major expansion and renovation of the facility. Just this past month, government, school, and cable company officials presided over a dedication ceremony for what is now a two million dollar facility. In attendance at the ceremony were all of the major political, educational, and corporate figures who now had an ownership share in the studio. Also included were former graduates of the school's television program. Many have gone into highly successful careers in television, film, and broadcast journalism. The studio itself is bedecked with awards and honors that were achieved

through their effort. Thirteen first place Hometown Video USA awards, an Ace nomination, the Rockefeller Brothers' Fund Arts in Education Award, as well as countless state and local citations, make this cable access facility one of the most unique in the country.

Today, GHS-TV serves as a model program that continues to produce original programming, inform the citizenry, and educate young people interested in telecommunications careers. The partnership that has been created between government, business, and education has made a significant difference in the lives of the entire Germantown community.



community volunteers, and it receives funding from a wide variety of sources including local government, school, and cable. For the Germantown public, the station serves as an information center, a vehicle for self-expression, and as a resource for increasing community awareness about issues that confront the city. For the students, GHS-TV not only affords an opportunity to receive hands on video training but also provides them with academic credit and their own school television channel. Most importantly, the students begin to develop leadership and organizational skills which in turn help them to acquire a higher degree of self confidence and self-esteem. The cable company accrues tremendous goodwill and loyalty, not to mention the fact that they have all of their access and local origination needs handled in a professional manner by an off-site staff and studio. Finally, the City of Germantown has a one-of-a-kind facility that is providing all segments of the community with an all-in-one cable access channel that works. Who could ask for more? It is a win-win-win situation for everyone involved. One day this type of facility may be more commonplace in other communities. Until that time, Germantown is proud to serve as a pacesetter and innovator in the field of access programming.

Frank Bluestein is Chairman of the Fine Arts Department at Germantown High School in Germantown, Tennessee. He serves as executive director for the school's million dollar educational television access facility, GHS-TV. He can be reached at 901/755-7775.

Resources

***The 1993 Directory & Resource Guide to Educational Access*, lists 54 Educational Access organizations with useful information about programming, staffing, budgeting, and training at each. To order, contact Alice French, 806/766-1212.**

***Cable In The Classroom*, a magazine designed to help teachers use educational television as an active teaching tool. Lists broadcast and cable programs by subject area and profiles teachers and media specialists using television creatively. Also includes special sections on student video productions, media literacy, and educational techniques. For subscription call 800/343-0728 or write 141 Portland St. Suite 8100, Cambridge, Mass, 02139.**

***Video and Learning*, a newsletter by and for video educators published by Educational Video Center. For information contact EVC at 60 E. 13th St., 4th Floor, NY, NY 10003. 212/254 2848.**

***Media and Methods*, a bi-monthly magazine published by the American Society of Educators. Especially good for those interested in hardware and new media. For information contact 1429 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102.**

***Visual Messages: Integrating Imagery into Instruction* by D. Considine & G. Haley. A text designed for a variety of classroom applications. Rich in visual illustration and practical classroom applications. Available from Libraries Unlimited, POB 3988, Englewood, CO 80155-3988. Telephone 303/770-1220.**

Resources

Strategies for Media Literacy, Inc. is a non-profit organization that promotes media education in the United States, beginning in early elementary school. The organization conducts teacher workshops, publishes media education materials and serves as a center of support and collegiality for teachers of media. The *Strategies Newsletter* is published quarterly.

SML, INC.

Suite 410

1095 Market Street

San Francisco, California 94103

415/621-2911

Media Focus is published four times a year by **The Centre for Literacy, Inc.** in Montreal. The Center is a resource centre and teacher-training project designed to provide linking, training, research and information services that support and promote the advancement of literacy in the schools, the workplace, and the community. The Centre offers seminars and workshops, maintains an extensive collection of books and materials, and publishes the newsletter, *Literacy Across the Curriculum*.

The Centre for Literacy, Inc.

3040 Sherbrooke Street, West

Montreal, Qc, Canada

H3Z 1A4

The Center for Media and Values publishes *Media & Values*, a magazine for teachers and community-based group leaders which includes a media literacy workshop kit.

Center for Media and Values

1962 E. Shenandoah

Los Angeles, CA 90034 310/202-1936

The Media Literacy Clearinghouse and Center is a place where media educators and proponents can network and find support to help teach and integrate media literacy concepts into the classroom. The MLCC assists educators in developing media literacy teaching strategies and establishing collaborative efforts within the field.

MLCC

120 E. Wilson Street

Madison, WI 53703 608/257-7712

Access in a Digital Age

As the world moves from analog to digital, it becomes increasingly apparent that access to information is only the first plateau of human communication.

By Kathleen Tyner

One prevailing argument for access efforts is that knowledge is power. Certainly no one could maintain that a lack of information serves the needs of people in complex society, but the conventional wisdom about the relationship between knowledge and power deserves to be revisited if people are to access and create information they need to make informed decisions in a democratic, technological society. Digital technologies, in particular, call into question the popular notion that information is a finite commodity and that those who disseminate information are more powerful than those who receive it.

Access to media is not at all powerful if audiences cannot make sense of the information they receive. As the world moves from analog to digital, it becomes increasingly apparent that access to information — and to the channels that control its flow — is only the first plateau of human communication. Media literacy, the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and produce communication in a variety of forms, is the next step.

Without media literacy, the potential of digital communication is a case of too much of a good thing. In a digital world, images, texts, and sounds collapse into a 'bit stream' of raw data. Cable and broadcast channels are mere tributaries in the digital flow. The Internet 'network of networks' is a roaring river. Mass media models that produce information 'by the few for the many' are becoming quaint anachronisms, replaced by news, entertainment and advertising by the many for the many. Citizens are left to sort through the flotsam and jetsam of this digital tsunami and to select the information most useful to their circumstances.

If literacy is the cornerstone of a democratic society, then it is imperative that the definition of literacy be extended to include electronic as well as printed information so that an active, informed citizenry can make the decisions necessary to keep democracy alive in these times of great social upheaval. In fact, media literacy is not so different from print literacy. Its goals are the same. Media literacy is an active and demanding literacy that involves more than being able to make sense of a TV story between the commercial breaks. Media literacy requires the 'reader' to think independently, to question and to reflect on answers. Media literacy is an ideal that constantly negotiates tension between knowledge and power — between power and justice.

It is taught in most developed countries in the world — *except the United States*. In North America, it is mandated in secondary education in Ontario and the experiences of international media educators offer strategies for the implementation of media literacy education in the United States.

Because it is centered in critical thinking and teaching, there is no set formula for teaching media literacy, but there are certain concepts that media educators have found useful. The foremost concept is that all media are constructions. According to media educators around the world, media are not 'windows on the world,' or 'mirrors of society,' but carefully manu-

See Access in a Digital Age — page 24

Media Literacy

While there is an on-going debate about the precise components of media literacy, the internationally recognized definition is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and produce communication in a variety of forms. Media education refers to teaching about media when you teach with media — teaching students to think critically about all media information, from textbooks to television. Critical viewing is a term often used to define questioning techniques used in media education when teaching with and about television and film. Basically, critical viewing means to be an active viewer: to think about what you're watching and where it came from while you glean the information it presents. It stresses knowledgeable use of television rather than blind acceptance or militant distrust of it.

—adapted with permission from *Cable in the Classroom*

Visions of Empowerment, Media Literacy and Demystification

"They explained to me that this new television that they were going to create, and were busy creating, was, as they said, a voice for the voiceless. And those words are so much worth remembering. I would say that we have achieved some success, but reaching the voiceless has to be a purpose of this movement and a purpose of the people who are in it."

— Ralph Lee Smith

By John W. Higgins

In the August 1991 issue of CTR I discussed some issues close to the hearts of many public access and media literacy advocates: In what way is visual representation related to the politics of culture and power? Are there training methods by which we can encourage new models of visual representation to match the exploratory content of public access programs? In short, how can community television escape from the "Broadcast Clones" syndrome: where access programs merely mimic the form of broadcast television, and therefore end up reproducing the same tired power relations found in mainstream television?

This article continues that discussion by focusing on the specifics of the vision of public access, and the point at which that vision moves into implementation: training. At this time I am conducting a study that investigates whether or not the vision actually does what it says: help citizens empower themselves through video training.¹ While the results are not yet complete, the inquiry has led through an interesting maze of intersecting ideas that community television and visual literacy proponents may find interesting.

Empowerment: What is it? As part of this study, I've recently sifted through 25 years of literature related to public access, produced by the alternative video movement, scholars, cable companies, government agencies, and research think tanks. In two and a half decades, all of these sources have talked about something called "empowerment," but very few have defined it. No one has really studied systematically whether such a thing as "empowerment" is a consequence of participation in the production of public access programs.

Granted, there is anecdotal evidence that something is going on that "looks like" something that may be empowerment.² However, if public access to video communication is to survive and flourish, it will be necessary to provide policy makers with more specific documentation of its uses and benefits.³

So what is the empowerment that is proposed by public access? In most of the public access literature, you have to read between the lines. And this sort of reading is much easier when the "vision thing" is put into a historical context.

The Vision of Public Access. In the late 1960s and early '70s, an old idea — that some social injustices might be addressed by technology — was given a new focus: portable video. The idea went like this: With the new portable video equipment for program creation, and the emerging broadband cable television for a distribution system, the inequities of a monopoly controlled broadcast media system would begin to be addressed. Everyday people would have their voices heard through the electronic media, and others would be able to hear the rich diversity of perspectives their neighbors had to offer.⁴

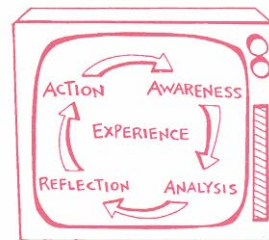
The "diversity of ideas" that was to be encouraged by public access also involved other utopian visions — in particular, that of individual and group empowerment. In this vision, empowerment meant becoming aware of one's self, others, and society, and after one had a "voice," actively working to influence society.⁵

This empowerment was to take place, in part, through video production training. Learning to create television programs would demystify the media as individuals became aware of media structure and influence. Participating in the production of television programs would lead to a "visual literacy" as individuals learned how to "read" and "write" media codes. These skills would allow persons not only to become more discriminating viewers, but would also allow them to actively speak out in the media and shape their social world. Thus, they would discover their own "voice."

This vision of empowerment through public access video training was shared by practitioners, academics, and others. It is a vision widely accepted today — to the point that its assumptions are often considered sacrosanct, unquestioned within the movement itself.⁶

Empowerment Defined. The underlying concepts of the public access vision of empowerment have much in common with the areas of visual literacy, media education, and critical pedagogy. In particular, the media education and critical pedagogy literatures 1) more fully describe "empowerment," 2) delineate the ingredients of empowerment within a video training context, and 3) suggest a direction for training methods which might help advance the concept of empowerment.⁷

Based on the contributions from these sources, I have defined empowerment as similar to Brazilian educator Paulo Freire's "praxis": practice and reflection. Empowerment, therefore, consists of awareness, self-reflection, and action. This awareness includes a recognition of one's self, others, and society, and the power relationships involved within each



Art from the Center for Media and Values, Los Angeles, CA. Used with permission.

On Training

"... Training in video should always be carried out within a framework of general training in social communication: the role of video and television is thus relativized with respect to other mass media or traditional means of communication. This approach using an overall framework allows participants to put each workshop, whatever its technical or conceptual content, into a perspective that includes the other stages of the communication process, from conception through dissemination to critical reception of the media."

— Alain Ambrosi, from *Video the Changing World*

continued next page

Allies in Media Literacy

The Council for Public Media was founded to democratize our media, to promote alternative media, and to explore how the new electronic media can help promote social change. The Council publishes the *Media Monitor Newsletter* on a quarterly basis.

Council for Public Media
P.O. Box 4703
Austin, TX 78765

National Alliance for Media Education (NAME) c/o The Alliance of Media Arts Centers (NAMAC)

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Oakland, CA 94612
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1012 Heather Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912
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Citizens for Media Literacy
38 1/2 Battery Park
Avenue Ste. G
Ashville, NC 28001

continued from previous page

and as they intersect. Through self-reflection, a person sees how these relationships affect him or her. Recognition then leads to individual and/or group action to influence the personal and social realms.

Ingredients of Empowerment Through Video. That's the vision of empowerment that emerges from the public access, media education, and critical pedagogy literatures. Within a video production environment, the concept becomes a bit more concrete. The definition suggests that a trainee or producer is aware of mainstream and alternative approaches to the following elements:

- the technical elements involved in program construction, (e.g., audio, lighting, editing, etc.);
- the symbolic codes that are behind this program construction (e.g., a close up conveys the idea of talking face-to-face with someone);
- the values and beliefs these codes represent (e.g., talking close enough to stare into someone's eyes is socially acceptable);
- media structure, including ownership, economics, program distribution, and the organization of the production team (e.g., using a traditional top-down organizational model for the production group);
- the influence of media on society, and society on media (e.g., the impact of advertising and capitalism).

The definition of empowerment also suggests that, in addition to these cognitive elements, a trainee or producer should be able to recognize that all of these elements are human constructions and can be changed. Here is where the question of self-reflectivity enters: the empowered producer is seen as someone who also is able to position himself or herself in relation to the above elements.

For example: Does the producer choose to reproduce the traditional means of video representation by consciously using established norms of video production? These rules sometimes reflect traditional values toward women, expressed symbolically. Where does she place herself with regard to these values? Does recognizing these rules and the values behind them, as well as her own relationship to the rules and values, lead her to lobby to change them in her video program? In her daily life? In short, does the process and content learned from working with video equipment carry over into other aspects of the trainee's life?

This is the construction of empowerment that I am working with in this study. It is worth noting that empowerment is not something that can be given to another person; empowerment is a condition that originates from within the self. In other words, no one gives you a voice; instead, you find your own voice.

Mechanics of the Project. Basically, I'm investigating whether or not community producers have a perception of the video production experience which

is similar to the definition of empowerment described prior, or another of their own construction.

For this study, I am talking with community producers in structured, open-ended individual and group interviews. The research methods are based on the concept that humans generally seek information when they encounter an obstacle, or gap, of some kind that blocks their life path. To bridge that gap, people move from their path and seek information, methods, and new approaches that they find helpful. Once the gap is bridged, the individual generally returns to his or her now-changed life path.⁸

This theory, called "Sense-Making," directs that any investigation of information use within community television must be oriented from the point of view of the user (i.e., the community producer), and not from the perspective of an outside observer (i.e., the researcher or access center staff). Sense-Making interviews allow the community producer to construct a personal universe, and to interpret that universe for the researcher. Ultimately then, questions of empowerment will be decided by those being interviewed: the community producers.

The results of this study should begin to emerge in the fall of 1993. The results will be specific to the producers interviewed, and not generalizable to the entire national community of public access volunteer producers. Nonetheless, the study will provide the community television movement with significant data that will help evaluate claims of empowerment, media demystification, and visual literacy that have circulated for over two decades.

I expect that this study will also illuminate issues related to empowerment. For example, those public access training methods which encourage a sense of empowerment will probably emerge. Issues worth studying in the future will also become evident, such as: Do access center management and staff, particularly trainers, buy into the empowerment vision of public access? Do training programs consciously reflect this value of empowerment? Do viewers of public access programs experience something related to empowerment?

Praxis: Practice and Reflection. These and other questions point to the desirability of forging deeper bonds between the communities of public access practitioners, and scholars and researchers operating in the area of practice-based theory. Indeed, it was such a coalition of divergent groups that helped public access to cable television get its start in the late 1960s.

It is appropriate at this time for both parties to step back from the experiences of the past two and a half decades and evaluate the progress in implementing the public access vision of empowerment. Anecdotal evidence from within the access environment indicates that something resembling empowerment is taking place there; theories and methods from the academic arena assert that this empowerment is detectable within the confines of a research study. It seems to be a natural alliance, with the interaction

between practitioner and academic enriching the lives and work of both.

Realistically, however, working together will require a stretch for both factions, given that one is oriented primarily toward action, the other toward reflection. Having operated within both camps, I am familiar with the stereotypes held at times by each, as well as the individuals who help give the stereotypes such credibility. But it is the union of the two approaches that Freire had in mind when he described praxis as "the action and reflection of men [sic] upon their world in order to transform it."

This transformation of the world was the vision behind the emergence of public access television. The vision holds that empowerment can be nurtured, in part, through media literacy and demystification. It is this goal of social transformation that continues to lie behind the words, "a voice for the voiceless."

John Higgins is completing his dissertation in the Department of Communications at Ohio State University and can be reached at 137 1/2 W. Hubbard Ave., Columbus, Ohio. 43215. Telephone 614/294-3109.

Notes

¹ This study is part of my doctoral dissertation, currently in progress. The sources cited in this article are only a sample listing of references. I am grateful for the many contributions and insights provided by Brenda Dervin of the Department of Communication at Ohio State University.

² An illustration of this is provided by stories relayed in the "Access = Diversity" issue of CTR (September/ October 1992).

³ An example of data collected in the area of audience and access is the work of Frank Jamison and Western Michigan University's National Clearinghouse for Community Cable Viewership Research.

⁴ For an account of the emergence of public access on cable television as a result of the combined efforts of proponents in the cable industry, academics, video and social activist groups, and government, see Streeter (1987). For a history of public access, see Gillespie (1975) and Engelman (1990). For a history of the NFLCP, see Bednarczyk (1986). For classic examples of the utopian vision of portable video, see Shamberg and Raindance (1971) and Willener, Milliard, and Ganty (1972).

⁵ The concept of film and video used for social change was an integral part of the National Film Board of Canada's "Challenge for Change" program, as described by Stoney (1986) and Gillespie (1975).

⁶ In fact, critiques point to at least three problems with the public access vision: 1) the vision is too dependent on technology as a cure-all; 2) it does not address the necessary structural changes in society necessary for authentic change; 3) there is no real attention paid to the process by which the vision is to be implemented.

I am basing these critiques primarily on Slack (1984); Willener, Milliard, and Ganty (1972); and Williams (1974).

⁷ Media Education and Critical Pedagogy were discussed more fully in my August 1991 article, as were the general approaches to training practices these areas indicated.

Within Media Education, authors of note include Buckingham (1990), Masterman (1989), and Sholle and Denski (1993).

Critical pedagogy is concerned with the content and process of teaching and learning. It is founded primarily on the works of Paulo Freire (1989, writing in 1970). Recent contributions have come from Giroux (1992) and McLaren (1989).

⁸ This is a rough sketch of Dervin's Sense-Making (1989).

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Training SIG

In access centers all over the country we are training our communities to make television. Often we are using the same hardware but our techniques, philosophies and certification requirements vary greatly. Whenever a bunch of trainers gather, it is amazing to witness the energy of exchange. The Trainers SIG (Special Interest Group) offers a way to continue these conversations. Networking through conferences, the Alliance for Community Media bulletin board and On Track, the SIG newsletter, trainers can share methods for dealing with our common issues. For more information about joining the Trainers SIG or receiving On Track, contact Chuck Peterson at GRTV, 50 Library Plaza NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503. Telephone 616/459-4788.

Best of the Northwest Festival Brings Out the Best in Access

No More Broadcast Clones

The Northwest Region of the Alliance for Community Media added the following categories to its annual Best of the Northwest Festival:

■ Empowerment

A program that exemplifies how public access empowers people to speak for themselves through the medium of television.

■ Community Involvement

A program that helped bring people together in a community or cultural group; a program that documents community events and celebrations; or a large scale production involving many community access volunteers.

■ Programs That Make a Difference

A program created in connection with an organized effort to achieve a specific social, political or community goal.

■ Human Understanding

Programs about local people with interesting stories or valuable insights; a sharing of common or uncommon life experiences; programs that encourage an appreciation of the human diversity that makes our communities unique.

By Paula Manley and Carol Burns

When Benjamin Davis was three years old he was diagnosed with the most severe case of autism out of 400 children in his age group. Today, following three years of massive intervention and therapy, he shows few visible traces of the neurological disorder. A remarkable videotape made by his father, Howard Davis, and shown on public access television in Portland, Oregon, dramatically shows Benjamin's descent into autism and his recovery.

The tape, *And Still Climbing*, which relies heavily on home video footage, was honored with an award in the 1993 Best of the Northwest Video Festival. The annual festival is sponsored by the Northwest Region of the Alliance for Community Media.

Benjamin and his dad were both on hand at the Best of the Northwest Awards Ceremony held in April in Yakima, Washington. Before an enthusiastic audience of 100 people, Howard Davis gave a moving account of making the tape and his son's struggle with autism. When it was his turn at the microphone, Benjamin, who is now an articulate six year old, stole the show: "Thank you for helping my dad tell my story..." he said.

Although *And Still Climbing* doesn't look much like a "typical" documentary, it has proven to be a uniquely valuable project with many positive impacts. According to Howard Davis, a minister of the Worldwide Church of God, the tape has assisted families with autistic children who often feel isolated and unable to cope. "Parents who have seen it have repeatedly told me 'It validated my whole experience,'" he says. *And Still Climbing* has also proven uniquely valuable to medical professionals because it captures the progression of autism and the stages of recovery following therapy. "It demonstrates the efficacy of massive intervention at an early age," says Davis. Copies of the tape have been requested by physical therapists, neurologists and other doctors to aid in their work with autistic patients. A major insurance carrier has also requested a copy of the tape as the company considers making insurance coverage available for autism therapy. And finally, according to his father, the tape was empowering for Benjamin in helping him to understand his own history and come to terms with his autism.

In the past three years, the Best of the Northwest Video Festival has undergone changes specifically designed to acknowledge the value and impacts of community access programs such as *And Still Climbing*. These changes in the festival have assured that "tapes that make a difference" are recognized over productions that imitate commercial television in style and content.

Starting in 1992, the Best of the Northwest Video Festival developed several new *Community Producer* categories which are closely linked to the community access mission. These include "Empowerment," "Community Involvement," and "Human Under-

In the past three years, the Best of the Northwest Video Festival has undergone changes specifically designed to acknowledge the unique value and impacts of community access programs.... These changes in the festival have assured that "tapes that make a difference" are recognized over productions that imitate commercial television in style and content.

standing." In addition to *Community Producer* categories and *Media Professional* categories, the Festival initiated 13 *Open Categories* which are available to community producers as well as community access staff. Fears that staff and other media professionals would sweep the Open Category awards proved to be unfounded; the majority of award winners have turned out to be community volunteers.

When entering the Best of the Northwest Video Festival, producers are encouraged to think about the impacts of their programs. The Festival entry form includes a series of questions such as: Why did you create this program? Who is your intended audience? What was the importance or impact of this program to your community?

Perhaps the most substantial change in the Best of the Northwest Video Festival has been the creation of an "Award of Excellence" designation for up to four "winners" in every category. By establishing a standard and allowing judges the flexibility to award multiple winners, the Festival is able to recognize a greater number of outstanding access efforts and place less emphasis on competition.

Howard Davis counts himself among those who approve of the recent changes to the Best of the Northwest Video Festival. The Festival, he says, "puts a premium on creativity and authenticity." Davis is convinced that "slick is not necessarily sincere" and that the Festival's focus is right on target. Perhaps the most significant—and hard to measure—impact of his own experience with *And Still Climbing* was that making the tape became a jumping off point for his activism in autism education. Davis is now working on plans for an international conference, and developing a grant for an ambitious new series of programs geared for parents and families of autistic children.

Paula Manley is Community Television Manager of Tualatin Valley Community Access, 1815 NW 169th Place, Suite 6020, Beaverton, OR 97006. Telephone 503/629-8534. Carol Burns is Programming Coordinator at Thurston Community Television, 2940 Limited Lane, Olympia, WA. 98502. Telephone 206/956-3100.

Assessment

How to Measure Access Success

By Bob Devine

In franchising, re-franchising and review processes, public access operations ought to be able to demonstrate some measure of accountability for the resources they expend, and should also be able to put forward some criteria by which the performance, progress and success of the organization can be assessed. Given the diversity of services provided by most public access centers (outreach, training, facilitation, programming, coordination, etc.) the ambiguity of our mission (protecting speech, promoting localism, serving as a focal point for independent production, acting as an alternative television station, being a link in a national network of alternative programming, etc.), the lack of client clarity regarding access operations (the blurring of public/private motives, the exchange of programming for privilege, the dichotomy of cable-casting/service, and the protections of novice speakers versus the support of and ownership of long-term participants, etc.) and the public's often skewed perceptions of what access is about, it is sometimes difficult to focus on meaningful criteria and to find useful measures of progress and success.

One of the ways we have of assessing success is through examining the programming produced and cablecast. Quantities of original programming seem to provide some index of productivity and accountability. One can look at the ratio of dollars spent to programming yield, or can look at some source/quantity formula to determine the diversity of access use. On the other side of the TV screen, audience measures present another program-based option for assessing access effectiveness. The difficulty with programming measures is that they all tend to frame the diverse activities of access in terms of the overarching goal of producing programming and a set of criteria which carry the baggage of commercial broadcasting. They invite a fundamental comparison between citizen speech and commercial programming, and most of us would agree that this comparison, taken out of context, often marginalizes access, in part because the programming efforts lack the "professionalism" of broadcast television, and in part because the "audience reach" is often less important than the community interaction generated by access activity.

Another approach to assessment is to present the often staggering numbers of those trained, those continuing on to produce, those facilitated, those volunteering, those visiting our facilities, those equipment hours utilized, those community bulletin board messages, etc. I'd like to suggest that while such quantification clearly provides a sense of the vitality of an access organization, and helps to develop baseline standards for measuring productivity and for making comparisons with other access centers, further analysis is needed to make such data useful, both to the access organization, and to those who seek to assess its performance.

Where to Begin. First, an analysis of operational data ought to be framed by consideration of how such activities fit with the *central goals and values* of public access. The significance of training, for example, is not confined to consideration of the numbers

of program producers it yields; training represents an investment in "community capital" and enhances the possibility for healthy and vital public discourse by increasing the number of potential speakers who might enter the "marketplace of ideas".

Training is not an end in and of itself, but is a means of nurturing and protecting the public speech that the First Amendment favors. Second, an analysis of the *qualitative dimensions* of training, facilitation, programming and use is needed in order to clarify and focus the effectiveness of the access organization in delivering services. The questions that might guide such an assessment are:

- 1. How clear is our mission?
- 2. What is it that we say that we're doing, and why is it important?
- 3. How well does the reality of what we do match that mission?

Access mission statements usually include language along the lines of "providing first come, first served access," to equipment, facilities, and channel time, providing support and training to enable the community to effectively use the access resources, and making efforts to see that the clientele and programming accurately represent the diversity of the community being served. These elements provide us with some starting points for assessing both quantitative and qualitative dimensions of success; (a) the *accessibility* of our facilities and services; (b) the *effectiveness* of our training and facilitation; and (c) the *diversity* of our clientele and programming. If we

Good Ethics

"It has not been easy to maintain good ethics. The constant example of the broadcast media, with their hunger for violence and controversy makes it difficult to remember there are other ways of doing things. The hardest thing for me, right now, is that no one is speaking out in horror at the poverty and hunger and powerlessness in our own countries, no one is crying out that we cannot be a just nation when we silently accept so much injustice, here and in the rest of the world. There is so much money for war, and so little to feed and educate the children of the world. Our countries cry 'poor', but they have never been richer. Where do we start? I hear so little, yet I know I am not alone with my concerns.

Or am I wrong? Are there many voices speaking out. . .and being filtered out of the public media, or given their brief five minutes, isolated in their little corners, and silenced? It seems to me that we need more than ever to hear many voices in the land. We silence them at our peril."

**- Dorothy Todd Hénaut,
Visual Anthropology Review,
Volume 7, No. 2, Fall, 1991**

Continued next page

take a somewhat broader gauge and consider the importance of this mission in First Amendment terms — the idea of encouraging, enhancing and supporting public dialogue and debate — we have another set of standards for measuring our success: (d) To what extent is access programming *congruent* with the cultures, concerns and issues in the community; (e) To what extent has access speech generated *interaction* around those ideas, issues and concerns; and, (f) To what extent do our access clients develop the sort of *agency* that might expected from untrammelled speech? These criteria, deriving from the mission and goals of public access, steer the assessment away from discussion of the quantity or “professionalism” of programming and the numbers involved to consider the social and cultural relationships involved in responding to speech. They also eschew the majoritarian dimension of audience reach in favor of the minoritarian criteria of significant public discourse.

Gathering Information. In focusing on the relationship of access to the community, it is important to gather sufficient information about the population, cultural life, organizational life and concerns of those served to be able to make determinations about how well access reflects and meets the needs of the community. Information from census data, Chamber of Commerce reports, town council reports, and historical documents can provide background information on the population of the community, the diversity of cultures and traditions, the patterns of growth and development, and the general issues and concerns it faces. In larger settings, government and agency reports, service projects and press coverage might provide some indication of the pressing or critical community issues. Some sort of “utilization” study will allow us ground an assessment of access services in the larger framework of the community it serves. We ought to be able to describe our individual clientele in terms of age, racial and geographic diversity as well as describing organizational clientele in terms of the broad spectrum of social service, community, educational, cultural and arts orientations.

A profile of the non-profit, community and service organizations in the access community will also provide helpful background. In cataloguing service and civic organizations, church and religious organizations, business organizations, neighborhood and community organizations, social service organizations and agencies, arts organizations, education associations, labor organizations and political groups, the access organization can gain a strong sense of the civic and cultural life of the community and can also begin to develop a baseline of information for future outreach efforts.

Our in-house documentation should provide us with sufficient data to develop a qualitative analysis of our operations. If record keeping has been accurate, we should be able to provide a quantification of service delivery over a 1-2 year cycle, including such things as (a) hours open to the public, (b) foot traffic through our facilities, (c) individual community members served at various levels, (d) organizations served, (e) hours of equipment use, studio use, edit time and playback time, (f) volunteer hours invested and staff hours invested. Records of outreach efforts should give us information about the groups that we have approached, the orientations, viewpoints, issues or cultural perspectives that they represent, our success in engaging them in access activities and the sorts of coalition building, agenda-setting and programming efforts that have resulted from those efforts. Further, we should be able to quantify the potential numbers of people engaged through analysis of the cumulative memberships of the organizations participating in access. Training information should be readily available, including not only numbers of those trained at various levels, but also the *yield* from training (those who go on to become active produc-

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ers) and the *retention* from training (those who continue to produce — those who have been active two years, three years, etc.). Channel logs, schedules and playback request forms can be utilized to develop a quantitative profile of the programming outcomes of our efforts. One framework that will help our analysis involves the source or origin of the programming on our channels. For example, we might break down programming by percentages of programming originating (1) with individual access producers, (2) with organizations, (3) from other sources or providers, (4) from satellite feeds or outside the local cable service area, and (5) in-house. Further, some other breakdowns that will provide insight into how the access opportunity is being utilized include (6) percentages of original programming in monthly/yearly schedule, (7) percentages of repeat programming in monthly/yearly schedule, (8) numbers of different providers/producers, and (9) percentages of different types or categories of programming.

In addition to in-house documentation, it's helpful to gather additional information from the client base, from the community, from cable viewers (if possible) and from other access systems. A client survey mailed to core users or administered by telephone can provide information on (a) initial and continuing motivation for involvement, (b) experience in entering into and passing through orientation and training programs, (c) areas of programming interest and participation, (d) levels of volunteerism, (e) perceptions about the quality of service delivery in a variety of areas, (f) areas of strength and weakness, and (g) future directions. A complementary technique for gathering perceptions and attitudes from the client base is the focus group. Groups of 8-12 producers and/or volunteers in focused and directed discussion can add qualitative depth to surveys and other assessment efforts.

Due to the complexity of gaining access to the cable subscriber base, direct viewership surveys are not easy to undertake, and usually require close collaboration with the cable operator and/or the regulator. When resources are sufficient, the use of a subscriber bill-stuffer or a telephone survey can, at minimum, provide information on (h) general recognition of the access channel(s), their programming, mission and nature, (i) recognition of specific programs, series or informational campaigns, (j) frequency and patterns of viewership of access offerings, and (k) general perceptions about the value of the local access channel and service. Sometimes such a survey can be piggy-backed on the regulator's efforts to assess subscriber satisfaction.

General community perceptions of and attitudes about access will be extremely significant in times of franchising and franchise renewal. The access organization can use the assessment as an opportunity for

outreach. Recognition surveys¹ conducted in public places or through random telephone samples, meetings with community leaders to discuss their perceptions of public access, meetings with non-profit and agency leadership to discuss their use (or potential future use) of access opportunities and the manner in which access might engage constituencies and address particular needs, and other survey techniques provide a forum for publicizing the access effort and building broad community support. At the same time such efforts will be helpful in (l) assessing the effectiveness of outreach and publicity efforts, (m) profiling who is and is not served by current operations, (n) determining how access addresses community issues and concerns, and (o) determining where future efforts will be needed.

Comparisons with other access centers of similar size or circumstance can put the local effort in perspective. In comparing the general cable and regulatory framework (the franchise date, the population, the cable penetration, the number of access channels, the nature of the access-providing organization, etc.) the budget framework (the startup capital, the annual operating budget, the percentage of budget derived from non-cable sources, the number of staff, the percentage of budget allocated to staffing, etc.), the facilities (the portable, edit and studio equipment available, the hours of facility usage per year, etc.) the training (the numbers on training, yield and retention), and the programming (the hours and types of programming originated, etc.)², we can begin to get a picture of (p) the relative effectiveness of the access operation in utilizing resources and delivering its services, (q) the strengths and weaknesses of the local operation, and (r) how the local experience compares to access experience elsewhere.

Analysis. Once information has been gathered, it is important to return to the frame of reference of the mission and goals of access in developing a qualitative analysis of success. How accessible and diverse is access? How well do the training, facilitation and programming efforts reflect the mission and goals of the organization? Questions that might generate this sort of analysis are listed below. Such questions could also be used in brainstorming with staff, in conducting focus groups and in interviewing clients or community members.

Accessibility. To what degree does the access organization permit ease of involvement? Is the climate of the organization perceived as welcoming or not? Is the core group perceived as an "in group"? Are there a group of long-time clients or volunteers who express some "ownership" of access operations? What are the barriers to use of access? How do such factors as geography, public transportation, times of business, specialized equipment, required times or skill levels present hurdles for accessibility? How has the organization worked at overcoming these hurdles? Who is not served by the access organization? Why? What would it take to get more people involved or to make access services more accessible?

Diversity. Given the profile of participation that has been generated through information gathering, who is over-represented in your access operations? Who (population, geographical areas, age, race, gender, program interest, issue orientation, political spectrum) is under-represented? What "players" might be using access who are not? What issues or concerns of the community should be there but are not? Who would be capable of addressing those issues? How diverse are the types and styles of programming? What types of programming are absent. Where sort of outreach plans are aimed at

diversity? Where could the access organization do more?

Programming. How are the issues and concerns of the community, as profiled in government, agency and non-profit reports and in the press, reflected in access programming? How are the diverse cultures and cultural practices of the community reflected on the access channels? What are public perceptions of access programming? How does the public "use" access programming? Are there instances of when access sets a public agenda or when the public acts on the discourse of access programming? Are there instances of interaction with and around access programming? What is the public perception of the quality of access programming?³ Is there improvement, due to ongoing training, in the production value of programs? Is programming adequately and reliably scheduled and promoted? Is programming reliably played back on the channel(s) with minimal error? Is there a balance between first-time and continuing producers? Is there a representative programming mix on the channel(s)? Do clients, viewers and community members perceive an adequate program mix on the channel(s)? Are there adequate mechanisms for determining fair-share of channel time, series scheduling, etc.?

Training. Is there clarity in the training program and in its objectives? Is there a clear path for the client to follow in continuing to acquire and build skills? Is there continuity in formal and informal support? Does the training program provide sufficient depth and hands-on experience to be useful to diverse clientele? To what extent does the training program provide the skills of critical media literacy? Do trainees continue to grow and develop, or do they "stall" at the beginning levels of proficiency? Is there continuing support for improvement? Is there demand for/interest in advanced training? To what extent do trainees become self-sufficient, autonomous and independent? To what extent do they continue to depend on staff for production expertise, leadership, direction and coordination? To what extent does the training program provide agency? What are the critical junctures at which clients are "lost" in the ongoing processes of moving through to production? To what extent are the skills transferred to the community? Do groups and organizations extend the training in production and media literacy beyond access?

Facilitation. What are client perceptions of the general helpfulness of the access operation? Do users receive support and attention sufficient to be effective? What are the indications of client satisfaction and dissatisfaction? How have complaints, delays, deferrals and suspensions of service been handled? Is there continuity in formal and informal facilitation support? What are the quantitative and qualitative measures of accountability for staff in providing facilitation? At what percentages of productive capacity are various facets of the access operation facilitated (i.e. percentage of available studio time/edit time/portable time, etc., utilized)? To what extent do facilitation routines and practices maximize the use of the access resources among the broadest possible population? How is quality control maintained? Are scheduling practices and policies reliable and adequate? What are client perceptions about the responsiveness, follow-through and timeliness of access facilitation?

Organization and Management of Resources. Does the organization have a policy infrastructure that reflects the mission and goals of access? Does the organization have a clear and accountable process by which the organization develops and reviews policy? Are there clear lines of responsibility for budgeting, budget management, controls, accountability and auditing of financial records? Does

"How accessible and diverse is access?
How well do the training, facilitation and programming
efforts reflect the mission and goals
of the organization?"

the organization have a clearly specified procedure for allocating resources? What percentages of resources go to administrative overhead and to actual program delivery? Are cost/benefit figures available for various facets of service, training, facilitation and programming? Does the organization have adequate systems for managing, inventorying and securing the capital plant and for risk management? Are there adequate and reliable schedules for maintenance, depreciation, replacement and technical audits of the physical plant? Are personnel policies complete and adequate? Are planning processes sufficiently detailed to help the organization move ahead? In what areas could the administration be strengthened to serve the needs of the community more effectively?

The Ripple Effect. To what extent has access activity stimulated other kinds of community involvement? How and to what extent has access activity focused or set an agenda for the community? Has access training, facilitation, production and programming stimulated other organizations to work and using media to work at the issues and pressing concerns of the community? Have other organizations purchased equipment, built studios or initiated production activities as a direct outcome of participating in access? How has the participation of access clients and volunteers forged new associations and groupings that lead to agency? How has access brought private citizens into public life? Given the organizations participating in access and their membership numbers, how many people are potentially touched directly by access?

These questions and measures attempt to get beyond simple quantification in looking at the who is using access, how it is being used, how it is grounded in and serves the diverse needs of the community, how well it lives up to its mission, and how it might develop and improve its delivery of services. For audiences outside of the organization it provides quantitative and qualitative standards of accountability as well as affording an opportunity for public education about the mission and operations of access. For internal audiences (board, staff, clients and stakeholders) it provides a forum for critique, planning and organizational development as well as an opportunity for reflection on and rededication to the founding ideals of public access.

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¹Are the name, channel logo, or specific programs recognized by a random sample of passers-by? Further, are those queried aware of the mission and operations of the access organization and/or the First Amendment nature of access?

²The Buske Group has begun to compile the Community Programming Index which should be very helpful in this regard. Inquiries should be addressed to The Buske Group, 2015 J Street, Suite 28, Sacramento, California 95814.

³One can talk about production value in terms of that which is equipment based (which can be improved through additional or improved equipment), that which is training based (which could be improved by additional training), and that which is in the nature of access (programming by novice producers more concerned with message than with form and production value).

Access in a Digital Age

continued from page 16

factured products intended for specific purposes. Although media are not, by definition, 'real,' they have political, economic and social implications for policy and behavior in the real world.

This concept is particularly tough for those who seek redress through community access for a long history of inaccurate, misrepresentations in mass media. Media education does not ignore this inequity. It encourages alternative, diverse re-presentations, especially those that entail people speaking for themselves, all the while reminding us that all media are constructions and that none of it — not even independently produced media — is value-free, balanced and objective. The media education process encourages audiences to question media representations of people, places and things and to place them in their historical, economic and cultural context, no matter who produces them.

Media educators around the world insist on a complete approach of both media analysis and production. Since the overriding goal of media education is not job training for independent producers, or personal self-expression, but enhanced democratic citizenship skills, the primary purpose of production is to inform the analysis of mass media information created 'by the few for the many.' Jobs, artistic expression, and getting the word out, are important byproducts of production, but without analysis and action, true empowerment cannot take place. Simply learning to master the tools of technology is not nearly enough.

Media education encourages active collaboration of the audience in the communication process. Not all people want to produce, but all people are citizens who can learn to actively analyze and evaluate information. All this is not to say that the question of equitable access to information and the means to produce it is solved. Access still faces formidable barriers around the world and access organizations must still use most of their resources to achieve the basic right to create and receive information. Even so, most organizations devoted to equitable access have all the ingredients in place to take the next step to incorporate media literacy education in their training programs.

It is a vital and worthy challenge, one that has already manifested itself in places like Austin, Texas where Austin Community Television (ACT) producers joined Austin public school teachers in the summer of 1992 in a Media Literacy Institute conducted by Strategies for Media Literacy (San Francisco) and Southwest Alternate Media Project (Houston). The teachers and producers there saw that together they had a vast store of human resources to draw upon to bridge production and analysis and to initiate a program of media literacy education in their community.

Media education is enjoying increasing popularity in schools, community groups and health organizations as well. It is a logical and necessary brand of literacy that has the potential to enhance social justice by teaching active citizenship skills. Media literacy education has the potential to realign an equitable relationship between knowledge and power and to revitalize the central democratic goals of community access in the age of digital communication.

Kathleen Tyner is Founding Director of Strategies for Media Literacy (SML) and a research associate at Far West Laboratory in San Francisco. A producer, writer and teacher, Ms. Tyner also travels internationally to conduct media education workshops. For information about SML resources and workshops, contact Strategies for Media Literacy, Inc., 1095 Market Street, Ste. 410, San Francisco, CA 94103 415/621-2911.

1993 Hometown Video Festival Finalists

Some 435 finalists representing 192 cities in 33 states and five Canadian provinces were chosen from more than 2,000 entries representing 37 categories in the Alliance's 16th annual *Hometown Video Festival*, cable television's largest awards competition honoring locally produced programs.

Final judging was hosted by Portland Cable Access in Portland, Oregon.

Winners will be announced July 22 at a special awards ceremony during the Alliance's national convention in Atlanta.

The finalists are listed here. Congratulations to all. Single programs are listed with the Δ symbol, and series are indicated with a >.

ABOUT PUBLIC ACCESS-PROFESSIONAL

- Δ **Nutmeg Television - The First Amendment Gone Hollywood**, Mary Boylan, Nutmeg Public Access Television, Farmington, CT, Nutmeg Public Access
- Δ **Arnie of Oz**, Dan Hrkman, Miami Valley Cable Council, Centerville, OH
- Δ **SWOCC's World**, Tracy Thompson, Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission, Farmington Hills, MI, Metrovision
- Δ **CTV Insider**, Dale Irving, CTV: North Suburbs Community TV, Roseville, MN

ABOUT PUBLIC ACCESS-VOLUNTEER

- Δ **Access Showcase #5**, Zillah Matulonis, CABAC, Winthrop Harbor, IL
- Δ **Post Scripts Video Newsletter**, LeAnne Rice, Northwest Community TV, Brooklyn Park, MN

ACCESS PROGRAM PROMOTION-PROFESSIONAL

- > **Everyone is Different - Station IDs**, Neil Kull, Plainfield, IL, Wheaton Community Television
- > **Coming This Fall**, Dan Suffoletto, DATV, Dayton, OH
- > **MVCC Promos**, Dave Gordon, Miami Valley Cable Council, Centerville, OH
- > **Channel 23**, Josh Hall, Channel 23, Avon, CO

- Δ **WCTV Outreach**, Dean Smits, Wheaton Community Television, Wheaton, IL
- Δ **Faces of MCTV**, Angie Cochran, Multnomah Community Television, Gresham, OR

- Δ **Access Promo #1**, Tim O'Grady, U.S. Cable Zion Access Studio, Zion, IL
- Δ **City TV Station ID Spot**, David Jones, East Lansing Cable Communication, East Lansing, MI, City TV

ACCESS PROGRAM PROMOTION-VOLUNTEER

- > **TV Party - Promos**, Leon Rosenman, DCTV, Washington, DC
- > **GRTV Access Program Promotions**, James Jongsma, Grand Rapids, MI, GRTV
- Δ **Public Access - Today's Soapbox**, James

- Pilarski, Milwaukee, WI, MATA
- Δ **Promo: Blizzard of '92**, Ronald Vecchia, Winthrop Community Access Television, Winthrop, MA
- Δ **The Sticker**, Zachary Tellier, Manchester Community Television, Manchester, NH
- Δ **Gardena Public Access Promo**, Iris Goins, Gardena Cable Usage Corp, Gardena, CA, Paragon Cable

ARTS PROGRAMMING-PROFESSIONAL

- > **South Florida Art Center**, Pat Jones, WLRN Cable-TAP, Miami, FL, WLRN Cable-TAP
- > **A Fleeting Glimpse**, Michael Decsi, Rogers Community 10 - Toronto, Toronto, ON
- > **It's the Arts Comp. Reel**, Richard LaRue, Miami Valley Cable Council, Centerville, OH
- > **Art Beat**, James Bunn, Suburban Community TV, Doylestown, PA
- Δ **Public Art in the Park**, Sherri Hildebrand, Phoenix Channel Eleven, Phoenix, AZ
- Δ **Sharing the Artists' Vision**, Thomas M. Kruc, Continental Cablevision, Springfield, MA
- Δ **The Creative Moment: Artists at Work**, Kelley Ellsworth, DCTV, Washington, DC
- Δ **For The Love of Paint: Recent Works by Franklin White**, Kelley Ellsworth, DCTV, Washington, DC

ARTS PROGRAMMING-VOLUNTEER

- > **Where The Waters Meet: 12 Excerpts On Arts & Social Issues**, C. Zawadiwsky & Mark Mars, Milwaukee, WI, Milwaukee Access
- > **Little Dabblers**, Jacqueline Pliskin, PCTC, East Brunswick, NJ, CTN
- > **Artbeat**, Elaine Birtch, Springfield Area Arts Council, Springfield, IL, Dimension Cable
- > **Made in Somerville**, Sha Hsing Min, Somerville Community Access TV, Somerville, MA
- Δ **A Prayer**, Catherine Nash, Tucson Community Cable Corp., Tucson, AZ
- Δ **America Se Descubre**, Justin Metzner, DCTV, Washington, DC, DCTV
- Δ **Evolution of a Sculpture**, Sherry Massio, Victoria, BC, Rogers Community
- Δ **Art for Over the Television**, Mimi Graney, Somerville, MA, Somerville Community Access

COMPUTER ART-PROFESSIONAL

- Δ **Thanksgiving Football Helmet Kick-Off**, Thomas Brunt, Suburban Community Television, Doylestown, PA
- Δ **The MVCC 1992/1993 Graphics Expo**, Richard LaRue, Miami Valley Cable Council, Centerville, OH
- Δ **Ridelink**, Robin Gee, City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA, Los Angeles Cityview Channel 35
- Δ **ACTV Promo**, Marc Couch, Aurora Community Television, Aurora, IL

COMPUTER ART-VOLUNTEER

- Δ **Tom and Jerry**, Dave Silverman, Canton Cable Access Corp., Canton, MA
- Δ **Going Critical Intro**, James Jongsma, Grand Rapids, MI, GRTV
- Δ **Embryo Still Life and Transfiguration**, Renee Shaw, Wilmore, KY, WASB TV 3
- Δ **Stomach Upset**, Susan Edward, Milton Access Cable Television Corp, Milton, MA, Continental Cablevision

DOCUMENTARY EVENT-PROFESSIONAL

- Δ **Steppen Chemical: The Poisoning of a**

- Mexican Community**, Mark Day, Day Communications, Vista, CA, UTV Cable 54
- Δ **Voices of Hope**, Richard Gale, City of Beverly Hills, Beverly Hills, CA
- Δ **The American Spirit: 1992 Republican National Convention**, Don Payne, The Municipal Channel, Houston, TX, Warner Cable
- Δ **Brookline High School Sesquicentennial**, Chuck Simmons, Brookline Access Television, Brookline, MA
- Δ **Lady of Light - Cold Spring**, KY, Michael King, Dayton, OH, Dayton Access Television

DOCUMENTARY EVENT-VOLUNTEER

- Δ **Flames in the Valley**, Naomi Zeavin, Falls Church, VA, Fairfax Cable Access Corp.
- Δ **The Great Solar Eclipse of July 11, 1991**, Kerry Gordon, c/o Rogers Community 10 Toronto, Don Mills, ON
- Δ **UTV: 1992 Democratic Convention: Is Anyone Listening?**, Andrew Baraf, Cambridge, MA, Cambridge Community Television
- Δ **Hard Cover: Is This the Promised Land?**, Denise Zaccardi, Community TV Network, Chicago, IL, Chicago Cable Access Corp.

DOCUMENTARY PROFILE-PROFESSIONAL

- Δ **A Time To Shine, NYS Games For The Physically Challenged**, Ann Balderston-Glynn, Cablevision of Hicksville, Hicksville, NY
- Δ **The Making of "Fortune"**, Jo Scheder, Kumu Kahu Theater, Honolulu, HI, 'Olelo
- Δ **Sailing the Inland Seas**, Erik Mollberg, Alea County Public Library, Ft. Wayne, IN, Public Access Channel 10
- Δ **Katie Smith - Woman Pioneer**, Robin Gee, City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA, Los Angeles Cityview Ch. 35

DOCUMENTARY PROFILE-VOLUNTEER

- Δ **The Community House: Past and Present**, Nadine Maynard, Bloomfield Community Television, Bloomfield Hills, MI
- Δ **Welcome to Chimney Corners**, Pat Truscello, Brookline Access Television, Brookline, MA
- Δ **Rookie Bus Driver**, Amy Devereaux, Santa Barbara, CA, KCTV
- Δ **Len Cabral - The Storyteller**, Mia Manduca, Cambridge, MA, Cambridge Community Television

DOCUMENTARY PUBLIC AWARENESS-PROFESSIONAL

- Δ **We Speak**, Patricia Leahy, Gresham, OR, Multnomah Community TV
- Δ **DPI: Paving the Way to Freedom**, Doreen Vincent, Cincinnati Community Video, Cincinnati, OH
- Δ **In Our Hands, Beyond the Earth Summit**, Dean Evenson, Visions of the Planet, Bellingham, WA, TCI
- Δ **The Nation Erupts**, Cynthia Lopez, Deep Dish TV Network, New York, NY
- Δ **The More We Get Together (Child Care In Santa Monica)**, Brian Murphy, CityTV of Santa Monica, Santa Monica, CA

DOCUMENTARY PUBLIC AWARENESS-VOLUNTEER

- Δ **Video Dialtone: Mailing Our Free Speech**, Linda Iannaione, Paper Tiger Television, New York, NY, Manhattan Neighborhood Network
- Δ **PTSD: "Beyond Survival"**, Kevin Becker,

- Brookline Access Television, W. Newton, MA
- Δ **More Mileage For the Minke**, Erik Peterson, C3TV, Centerville, MA
- Δ **Heartache of the Disabled**, Barbara Grogomik, Little City Foundation, Chicago, IL, Continental Cablevision

EDUCATIONAL-PROFESSIONAL

- > **Down to Earth - Episodes #1, 4, 7**, David Campbell, Rogers Community 10 Calgary, Calgary, Alberta
- > **Right Turns Only**, Scott Schiller, Prince George's County Public Schools, Landover, MD
- > **Harron Cable Homework Hotline**, Susan Brodhagen, Port Huron Area School District, Port Huron, MI
- > **HIV Update**, Timothy Frick, Physicians Association for AIDS Care, Chicago, IL, Chicago Access Corporation
- Δ **Inside Kapunahala**, Irene Yamashita, Kapunahala Elementary School, Waimanalo, HI, 'Olelo
- Δ **Right Turns Only (#3): Goals & the Media's Mixed Messages**, Scott Schiller, Prince George's County Public Schools, Landover, MD
- Δ **The Party's Over**, Jeff Fogarty, Cox Cable Rhode Island, Inc., Cranston, RI

EDUCATIONAL-VOLUNTEER

- > **Report: Shelby County Schools, Frank, Bluestein**, c/o GHS-TV, Germantown, TN
- > **Double Elimination**, Alice French, LISD-TV, Lubbock, TX, LISD-TV Cable Channel 12
- > **1860 Belvo**, John Mlinek, Miami Valley Cable Council, Centerville, OH
- > **Video Parade**, James Gleason, Pacoima Middle School, Pasadena, CA, United Artists Cable
- Δ **Students View '92: The Presidency**, Alice French, LISD-TV, Lubbock, TX, LISD-TV Cable Channel 12
- Δ **Television: Speaking of the Future**, Chris Brainerd, Kamehameha Schools, Honolulu, HI, 'Olelo
- Δ **Drink...Drive...Die**, Debra Crowel, Kingwood College, Austin, TX, Austin Cablevision Studios
- Δ **The Paper Forest**, Glen Pla, Tampa, FL, Jones Intercable Public Access
- Δ **A Case of Date Rape**, Jennifer Boyer, Noshoba Cable, Pepperell, MA

ENTERTAINMENT-PROFESSIONAL

- > **The Funny Pages**, George Lacny, Rogers Cable TV, Surrey, BC
- > **Complaint Dept.**, Gary Wirachowsky, Rogers Cablesystems, Vancouver, BC, Rogers Community 5 Vancouver
- > **U.R.A.T.V.**, Robert Colman, Continental Cablevision, Needham, MA, Wellesley Channel 13
- > **Microwave Today - The Cooking Show of Tomorrow**, Michael Bolhouse, Omnicom of Michigan, Canton, MI
- > **Farm Life**, Josh Hall, Channel 23, Avon, CO, Channel 23
- Δ **Grottesco Shorts**, Charles Cirgenski, Public Benefit Corporation, Detroit, MI, Barden Cablevision
- Δ **The F.B.I. Guys**, Michael Raso, High Speed/Low Drag Productions, Totowa, NJ, Comcast Cable
- Δ **The Dead - Water**, Peter Conrad, Rogers Cable TV Ltd, Kitchener, ON, Rogers Community Television
- Δ **Weekend "Rock & Roll" Live**, Val Brown, KDCI Daniels Cablevision, Carlsbad, CA

6 ...increasing awareness
of Community Television
through educational programs
and participation in court cases
involving franchise enforcement
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about access television. 9



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15 Ionia SW, Suite 201
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